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WHAT CALVINISM HAS DONE FOR AMERICA

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What Calvinism Has Done for America

By

JOHN CLOVER MONSMA

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JOHN CLOVER MONSMA

TO MY WIFE

Our fathers' God, to Thee,
Author of Liberty,
To Thee we sing!
Long may our land be bright
With freedom's holy light!
Protect us by Thy might,
Great God, our King!

PREFACE

IN the following pages the author has tried to give a brief account of what he believes to be the origin of American fundamentals. In doing so he was fully conscious of the fact, that he was rowing against the current, that the majority of writers on this subject present an altogether different view,—a view to which the American public has become so accustomed, that any attempts to create a diverse opinion might easily be looked upon as foredoomed to failure.

And yet—the author is a sworn believer in the invincibility of Truth. "Truth, crushed to earth, shall rise again; The unending years of God are hers!" It was his love of what he regarded as the truth which made the author write the following pages.

At the same time, this book is meant to answer in some slight measure the clarion call that was issued twenty years ago by Holland's grand old man, Dr. Abraham Kuyper, when he lectured for a Princeton, N. J., audience. Said the Dutch statesman, ". . .I contend for an historical study of the principles of Calvinism. No love without knowledge; and Calvinism *has* lost its place in the hearts of the people. It is being advocated only from a theological point of view, and even then very one-sidedly, and merely as a side-issue. . . Since Calvinism arose, not from an abstract system, but from life itself, it never was in the century of its prime presented as a systematic whole. The tree blossomed and yielded its fruit, but without anyone having made a botanic study of its nature and growth. Calvinism, in its rise, rather acted than argued. But now this study may no longer be delayed. Both the biography and biology of Calvinism must now be thoroughly investigated and

thought out, or with our lack of self-knowledge, we shall be side-tracked into a world of ideas that is more at discord than in consonance with the life of our Christian democracy, and cut loose from the root on which we once blossomed so vigorously.''

Ours is a country of liberty and democracy. Perhaps no other truth is being held so constantly before the spiritual eye of the nation, at this time. Our fathers have bequeathed unto us ''a goodly heritage,'' and we mean to defend the same with our lives and possessions. It would seem that this is the opportune time to examine our ''heritage,'' to look into its origin and nature.

The author proposes to write a second volume, which will contain a description of the middle and southern colonies and a general historical survey up to the present time.

In preparing these pages considerable use was made of original documents. The author believes that George E. Ellis was right when he said, ''It is in the original documentary sources of our early history, written by those who made that history, not in even the best digests and compounds of it, that we are brought into the most communicative relations with the founders and early legislators of our Commonwealth.'' The reader will find quotations to be plentiful. The author, realizing that his stand is somewhat singular and exceptional, introduced reliable witnesses wherever a fit occasion presented itself. ''In multitude of counsellors there is safety.''

In conclusion the kindness and helpfulness of many state officials must be acknowledged. The librarians of the old Puritan states deserve special mention. Their kindness, in furnishing the necessary literature, was refreshing indeed. The author hereby publicly expresses his most cordial thanks to them, and may they fare well!

Chicago, J. C. M.

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INTRODUCTION

I STOOD in a huge mountaincleft, down in southern Colorado.

On my side a stream whirled by, noisily, turbulently, as though it were angry at the many bowlders that had dared to block its path.

From the rocks, high and low, sprung an hundred echoes.

It was wild and beautiful.

* * *

The week before I had carried out a novel plan: I had traced this stream to its source. Dangerous slate nor craggy hollows had deterred me. I fought and conquered. Among the things I had learned was that this youthful torrent had many tributaries—streams and streamlets that had, somewhere in the vicinity, sprung from the rocks—and I had noticed that these tributaries added considerably to the volume of the torrent.

But the *main* source I had not found in the rocks.

It lay in *other* regions.

It lay, high and far, in the snows, on the summit, where heaven touches earth.

* * *

And unto that mountain torrent I likened my country.

Its life has been fed, sustained, strengthened—oft-times, indeed, polluted—by many tributaries. Some men, in their study of national origins, have investigated these tributaries, often with astonishing minuteness,—but they do not seem to have gone beyond them.

And yet—the *main* source lies in *other* regions.

It lies, high and far, in the snows,—where heaven touches earth,—where God communes with man.

It lies in religion.
And the form of that religion was Calvinism.

* * *

Calvinism was not fathered by John Calvin. The system of ideas indicated by this word was in existence long before the illustrious man, whose name it bears.

Nor is "Calvinism" a mere synonym of Predestination, or any other specific doctrine of the Bible. It is more than a doctrine. It is more than a theological concept. It is a life-and-world-view.

This point was not always brought out with sufficient clearness by our American writers. Admirable accounts have been written of Calvinism, but the impression lingers that it belongs in the sphere of "dry theology," together with Arminianism, Pelagianism, Anabaptism, and the like, and that it has no theoretical and practical value outside of the walls of a few denominational seminaries. As a writer of note tells us, "Calvinism" has generally been regarded a sectarian, confessional, and ecclesiastical term.

That being the case, it should not excite wonderment that such an eminent writer as Doyle tells his readers, "The dialectical controversies of Calvinism are couched in a language to which we have lost the key; their phrases do not for us correspond to anything that really exists in human thought."* The writer, of course, had in mind the purely theological disputes of the colonial age. "Calvinism," to Mr. Doyle, was a "sectarian, confessional, and ecclesiastical term." And he represents a wide phalanx of authors.

Thanks, however, to the untiring efforts of men like Dr. Abraham Kuyper, former Premier of the Netherlands, and his spiritual forerunner, Guillaume Groen

*Doyle, English Colonies, Vol. III, p. 79.

van Prinsterer, statesman and royal secretary,—thanks, also, to the studies of fellow-countrymen like Professors Benjamin B. Warfield and Francis R. Beattie, of Princeton and Louisville, respectively,—we can now make a fairer and more truly historical appreciation of the things that our Calvinistic forefathers professed to stand for than a few decades ago. We have come out of the Narrows and find ourselves upon the broad and mighty Deep. Calvinism, in its broader aspect, has a strictly *scientific* meaning. It is a well-defined system of ideas,—of ideas concerning God and man, concerning the moral, social, and political life of the world. It is an organic structure, complete in itself. It is a gigantic tree, risen from one seminal principle, projecting its limbs in all directions, and lifting its verdant crown to the azure of heaven.

That the foundation-builders of American life had a *detailed* knowledge of Calvinism in this strictly scientific sense and were fully conscious of *all* that it implies, we would never essay to prove. But that they believed in it and were constantly controlled by it, are facts that need only the light of historical investigation to show forth their absolute stability. Because the majority of historians have never made a serious study of Calvinism they have never been able to tell us truthfully and completely what Calvinism has done for America. The one excludes the other.

* * *

The root-principle of Calvinism is the absolute sovereignty of God. All other Calvinistic doctrines and ideas can be deduced from it. The Isaiahnic, "All nations before Him are as nothing, and they are counted to Him less than nothing and vanity," and the Paulinic, "Who art thou that repliest against God?",—they are the passwords that will unlock the gates of Calvinism's

temple, that will cause them to swing open wide, so that the mystic grandeur of its interior may be seen and the splendor of its innumerable treasures.

This principle of divine sovereignty, when applied to the *Bible,* demands an absolute subservience to all of its prescripts, not only in the sphere of the church, but in all walks of life. God is the absolute Sovereign of all of life; therefore His Word should be the controlling factor in every sphere of life's activity.

This principle of divine sovereignty, when applied to the sphere of *religion,* demands the view that man exists for the sake of God, that the entire process of redemption has for its aim the vindication of the honor and justice of the Creator, and also, that it is only free grace which brings a man, dead in sin and misery, into a new relationship with the Father. It tolerates no human interposition between God and man and consequently no sacerdotalism, in whatever form it may appear. "Coram Deo," face to face with God, is a truly Calvinistic motto.

This principle of divine sovereignty, when applied to the sphere of *morals,* requires of all men conformity to the moral law of Holy Writ. Since, however, true morality, a morality that is principally perfect, can only exist, as Scripture informs us, when the Holy Spirit works in man's soul, man is required to pray constantly for the Spirit's operation.

This principle of divine sovereignty, when applied to *social* life, demands that all social relations and institutions, which God Himself, according to His Word, has established, shall be respected and adhered to, and demands, moreover, an implicit obedience of subordinates to those that are placed above them, since all earthly authority, or "sovereignty," has been derived from the sovereignty of God, and since a regard for

the former implies, necessarily, respect for the latter. At the same time this principle leads to the doctrine of the equality of men as men, since an inherent superiority of one man over another would be in contradiction with the absoluteness of the sovereignty of God. All sovereignty is vested in God, and in God only. There is no sovereignty in man whatsoever. What sovereignty man has is derivative in character; has been graciously granted unto him.

This principle of divine sovereignty, when applied to *politics,* must of necessity militate for the Biblical view that "there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God." Governments are instituted by God through the instrumentality of the people. No kaiser or president has any power inherent in himself; whatever power he possesses, whatever sovereignty he exercises, is power and sovereignty derived from the great Source above. No might, but right, and right springing from the eternal Fountain of justice. For the Calvinist it is extremely easy to respect the laws and ordinances of the government. If the government were nothing but a group of men, bound to carry out the wishes of a popular majority, his freedom-loving soul would rebel. For in the last analysis that would mean a rule of man over man. But now, to his mind, and according to his fixed belief,—back of that government stands God, and before Him he kneels in deepest reverence. Here also lies the fundamental reason for that profound and almost fanatic love of freedom, also of political freedom, which has always been a characteristic of the genuine Calvinist. The government is God's servant. That means that AS MEN all government officials stand on an equal footing with their subordinates; have no claim to superiority in any

sense whatsoever. At the very moment any such government official, be he kaiser or king or president, should begin to act in an arbitrary way and thereby intimate his purpose to ignore the derivative character of his official powers, every Calvinist would recalcitrate. The honor of his heavenly Sovereign would be at stake,—and his own rights and freedom. For exactly the same reason the Calvinist gives preference to a republican form of government over any other type. In no other form of government does the sovereignty of God, the derivative character of governmental powers, and the equality of men as men, find a clearer and more eloquent expression.

This principle of divine sovereignty, when applied to the *judiciary,* leads to the recognition of God as the supreme Lawgiver. In God is what the Romans were wont to call the "fas," the "jus divinum," the divine source of right, and all human right, all "jus humanum," is again derivative in character. The divine principles of right find their objective expression in Holy Writ and are subjectively and consentaneously revealed by the "still, small voice," the inner consciousness of those that truly have connection with the "Fons Juris." Every civil law must conform to the principles thus made known.

This principle of divine sovereignty, when applied to the sphere of *education,* demands that every man, woman, and child shall strive, or be caused to strive, after the highest possible development of the intellectual powers. The very evident reason for this is that the servant who is best informed as to the wishes of his master can best serve him. The more man knows concerning God and His works, the better he will understand the divine will, and the better able he will be to live a life that glorifies his Maker. An excursion into theological

metaphysics could be made at this point, but the nature of the present study and the purpose of this introduction forbid any digressions of that kind.

* * *

Calvinism—we shall henceforth use this name in its cosmological, scientific sense—can boast of a long history, a history that covers not merely centuries, but millenniums of human deeds and endeavor. Among those that believed in it and were its advocates some of the world's greatest men can be found. Anachronistic though it may sound, the statement is fully warranted that even Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were staunch "Calvinists," so far as the fundamental principle is concerned. At that ancient time no systematic development of this fundamental principle had, of course, taken place yet. For that matter one might go back to Noah and Enoch and maintain that even they honored and defended the principle which John Calvin, some four thousand years later, expounded in a systematic way. Proceeding from the patriarchal tents the "Calvinistic" movement took its course through the national channel of Israel; found its divine representative in the Rabbi of Nazareth; was advocated and popularized by that great student from Gamaliel's school, the Apostle Paul; was upheld by Ignatius, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Athanasius, Ambrose, and Augustine; from Augustine proceeded to Gottschalk and Peter Waldo; found an imperfect expression in the works of some of the Scholastics; was heralded with more clearness and distinctness by Thomas Bradwardine; caused the mighty endeavors of John Wyclif in England and of John Huss in Bohemia; and was finally embodied in the towering figure of John Calvin, the Genevese Reformer, whose mastermind cast it and shaped it and prepared it for its tremendous task in modern times.

In France the Huguenots arose, in Holland the Beggars, in Scotland the Covenanters, in England the Puritans, and in New-England both Pilgrimfathers and Puritans. They were all Calvinists. For them it remained to fight the world's battle of freedom,—freedom in church and state. For them it remained to save Protestantism in all countries of western Europe. "In Switzerland," says Fruin, "in France, in Holland, in England, wherever Protestantism had to maintain itself with the sword, it was Calvinism that won the battle."* And when, in the seventeenth century, the French monarch, Louis XIV, once more threatened the freedom of the nations, it was the spirit of Calvinism, residing in the youthful breast of King William of England, that turned the tide and caused western Europe and America to breathe freely anew. The eighteenth century found Calvinism in the grip of a mighty struggle. Pietism, Rationalism, the Encyclopaedists in France,—they proved to be enemies that were at once stubborn and fanatic. In Europe the influence of Calvinism waned; it was either crushed altogether or forced to assume a defensive attitude. In America, however, the situation presented a brighter aspect. Although its enemies in the new world were of much the same type as those in the old, yet Calvinism here possessed enough vitality to be able to rally its forces and wage a determined offensive.

The nineteenth century witnessed a further diminution in the ranks of the Calvinists, both in man-power and in vitality. In France the spirit of revolutionism and atheism prevailed; in Germany a pantheistic philosophy and a communistic sociology fought for recognition; in England utilitarianism was fast gaining ground; America furnished a melting-pot, not only for the dif-

*R. Fruin, Tien Jaren, etc., First Ed., p. 151.

ferent nationalities, but also for the different tendencies and —isms that European soil had produced. Besides, in American social and political life stark Materialism loomed up ever larger and with its coarse and grunting voice drowned out many of the finer sounds,—sounds in which the soul was wont to make itself heard; and in American church life Methodism was—and still is—swinging the laurel. We know, this is a rough drawing. But it ought to show at least the *trend* of human thought. The spiritual and intellectual air of modern times had gradually become too stifling to permit of any real Calvinistic growth.

And yet, Professor Francis R. Beattie tells us in his Calvinism and Modern Thought, "Calvinism is not dead."

And it would seem that he is right. Calvinism is not dead in Scotland, among the descendants of the old Covenanters. Calvinism is not dead in England, although the signs of life are few. Calvinism is not dead in Hungary, where only recently a movement was started by members of the Hungarian Reformed church in the interest of the Calvinistic principles. Calvinism is not dead in Holland, where its promoters form one of the strongest political parties, a party whose champion, Dr. Abraham Kuyper, occupied the first ministerial seat in the government for four years, and one of whose most eminent leaders, Theodore Heemskerk, occupied the same place for many years after Dr. Kuyper's incumbency,—all in the present century. Calvinism is not dead in our own America; its adherents are found in the Carolina's, in Pennsylvania, in New York, in the New England states, in many states north and west, and especially in western Michigan, where thousands of Dutch Calvinists have during the last few decades found an abode. It is, of course, an altogether different question,

whether our own Calvinists are still characterized by that rocky strength, that splendid virility, that indomitable courage, that child-like faith, by which such heroic deeds were accomplished in the past, by which the Dutch Beggars tantalized proud Philipp of Spain and the Ironsides of Cromwell made every soul on the continent look up with reverential fear.

Is Calvinism dead? We take leave to marshal two witnesses to the front, witnesses whose trustworthiness few will doubt: Professor Benjamin B. Warfield of Princeton and James Anthony Froude, the well-known English historian. Says the former:

"Here in America the impulse received from the great teachers who illuminated the middle of the nineteenth century—Charles Hodge, Robert J. Breckinridge, James H. Thornwell, Henry Boynton Smith, William G. T. Shedd, Robert L. Dabney, Archibald Alexander Hodge—I enumerate them in chronological order—we are thankful to say is not yet exhausted. . . . I fully believe that Calvinism, as it has supplied the sinews of evangelical Christianity in the past, so is its strength in the present, and is its hope for the future."*

And Dr. Froude, looking at the same object from a different angle, says:

"Calvinism was the spirit which rises in revolt against untruth; the spirit which, as I have shown you, has appeared, and reappeared, and in due time will appear again, unless God be a delusion, and man be as the beasts that perish."†

*Warfield, Calvinism Today, p. 30, 31.
†Froude, Calvinism, p. 46.

CALVINISM IN OLD ENGLAND

CHAPTER I.

CALVINISM* IN OLD ENGLAND

IN the last quarter of the thirteenth century two Englishmen were born that were destined to exert a profound influence upon the life and thought of their native country. The one was Guilielmus Occamus, generally known as William of Occam, and the other Thomas Bradwardine. Both of these men had seen the light,—the light of the dawn,—the dawn of Calvinism's day,—and both had believed in it. No, their vision was not equally clear. Occam saw less than did his contemporary. His seeing and his believing were in a large measure the result of his thinking. With him theology followed philosophy. Bradwardine, on the other hand, was first of all the man of faith, of a deep, clear faith. Yet, both men had their vision. They beheld the same object. And neither the Doctor Invincibilis nor the Doctor Profundus† was backward in announcing to the world what they saw.

Occam's fight against the realistic school, his denying the reality of "universalia," caused him to differentiate between reason and faith, between science and religion, between empirical philosophy and theology, which is the product of revelation. That such a course, from the Roman point of view, was extremely dangerous and meant nothing but the direst consequences, everyone will readily see. It was a stabbing at the heart of papal and ecclesiastical supremacy. In the Bible, Occam further taught, the highest, the absolute authority is vested. General

*As to the anachronistic use of this word, see the Introduction.

†Honorary titles of Occam and Bradwardine, respectively.

councils might err. The hierarchical system was not essential to the welfare of the church.

It will be evident from these points that Occam was by no means a meek follower of the "Vicar of St. Peter," the ecclesiastico-political ruler at Rome. And neither was Bradwardine. His furious assaults upon Roman Pelagianism and semi-Pelagianism, his subtle and yet vigorous defense of the absolute sovereignty of God, they augured a future that would be decidedly different from the past.

When Occam and Bradwardine passed from the scene of life, John Wyclif was a youth just in the twenties. It was through his almost superhuman efforts that the ideas of Occam and his companion were propagated and perpetuated and made to become a leaven, a leaven that would be slow, it is true, in its working, but that in due time would reveal a transformative power, so great, so strong, so tremendous, as perhaps none of the pre-Reformation leaders had ever dreamed of.

Wyclif was a Reformer of the Calvinistic type. The year of his birth is 1324. It was in the beginning of the "Babylonian Captivity of the Papacy." But although the papal throne had been removed from the Tiber to Avignon, in France, its occupant made strenuous attempts to maintain his prestige and looked disdainfully upon every embodiment of temporal power, that of France excepted. If newspapers had existed in that day the leading headlines would have announced weekly, and sometimes daily, new encroachments of the Pope. Bulls were hurled at everyone that refused to bow meekly and in humble submission. A steady stream of gold poured into the papal coffers,—gold for which unscrupulous and brutal agents had ransacked every English farmhouse, from Cornwall to Northumberland.*

*Milner, Kerkgeschiedenis, vl. VII, p. 146.

These were some of the conditions among which Wyclif appeared. Inspired by the teachings of Occam and Bradwardine, both of whom served in the capacity of instructor at Merton College, Oxford, while Wyclif was a student there,—and skilled in dialectics, the great Reformer of the fourteenth century began his fight for justice and for truth. He soon found many adherents among the lower classes, whose cause he pleaded, and also among the members of Parliament, whose rights he defended over against the arbitrary and outrageous claims of the Pope. The enmity then existing between England and France was a Godsend to Wyclif and his followers. The papacy was under the influence of the French, and anything that tended to decrease the papal power was gladly welcomed by a large division of the English Parliament.

Wyclif's main tenets were: That God is the absolute Sovereign;* that God has fore-ordained all things; that the Word of God is the only authority in matters of religion; that the hierarchical system of the Roman church is not based on Holy Writ; that Church and State are two, not one. In a world full of class-distinctions, absolutism, and proud aristocracy, Wyclif, the Calvinist, proclaimed the gospel of liberty and democracy. With falcon-eyes he sought out his antagonists, measured the distance, and made for them. He found them in dark hidden lairs and upon thrones of gold. He made no distinction.

Wyclif, thus Neal informs us, "maintained most of those points by which the Puritans were afterwards distinguished."† The question arises, Was this spiritual similarity between Wyclif and the Puritans simply a

*Milner, Kerkgesch., vl. VII, p. 164.
†Neal, Puritans, vl. I, p. 30.

matter of fortuity, from the human point of view, or are we able to trace lines of natural connection? If the latter be true, then this man Wyclif must have been of greater importance, even for our own American nation, than most historians have been willing to admit.

Wyclif himself wrote some two hundred volumes. His books soon found a way to the continent and were there used with far-reaching results by such men as John Huss, of Bohemia, and Jerome of Prague. But also in England they were very widely used, and at Oxford produced important results. The Lollards, as Wyclif's followers were dubbed, constantly increased in numbers. "Knighton, a canon of Leicester," thus Dr. Vaughan writes, ". . . tells us that in the year 1382 'their number very much increased, and that, starting like saplings from the root of a tree, they were multiplied, and filled every place within the compass of the land.' "* This Knighton was a contemporary of Wyclif. The larger number of Lollards were found in Norfolk and Lincolnshire, where hundreds of Flemish weavers had established themselves, men that were more enlightened in the spheres of religion and government than their English neighbors. In the last decade of the fourteenth century Lollardism in England may be said to have reached its highest point. It was openly preached in London. Itinerant preachers sowed its principles broadcast. In 1394, when King Richard II was absent in Ireland, a petition of the Lollards, attacking the Church, was presented to Parliament. The keynote of this document was the exclusive authority of the Word of God, implying the fundamental doctrine of Calvinism,—the Sovereignty of the Author of that Word. Richard II, upon his return from Ireland, de-

*Vaughan, Wickliffe, vl. II, p. 154.

manded an oath of abjuration from the chief petitioners. His demands were met in part.

The clericals, as was only natural, sought retaliation. Archbishop Arundel proved a bitter enemy of the Lollards and influenced King Richard's successor, Henry IV, to such an extent, that a severe persecution of all enemies of the Church was undertaken. The next king, Henry V, continued the persecution. But the Lollards were not wholly destitute of influential leaders, and at times the royal efforts seemed to have been spent in vain. It was a matter of ebb and flood with the followers of Wyclif. Finally, however, the defenders of the hierarchy saw their efforts crowned with at least a partial success, and Lollardism lost its influence in the upper circles. In 1427 the bishop of Lincoln, at the command of Pope Martin V, carried out the decree of the Council of Constance against Wyclif's remains. One of the graves in the churchyard at Lutterworth was made to yield its contents. They were burned and the ashes thrown into a brook tributary to the Avon. Wordsworth saw in this worse than childish act a symbol of the spread of Wyclif's principles:

"As thou these ashes, little Brook, wilt bear
Into the Avon, Avon to the tide
Of Severn, Severn to the narrow seas,
Into the main ocean they, this deed accurst
An emblem yields to friends and enemies
How the bold teacher's doctrine, sanctified
By truth, shall spread throughout the world dispersed."*

John Fiske, the modern historian, tells his readers that the great spiritual awakening in England began with the Lollards and writes of the world-wide results

*Wordsworth, Eccl. Sonnets, Pt. II, xvii.

of their efforts. And he is right. It is true, since the year in which the Avon received the great Reformer's ashes the Lollards as a party have disappeared from public life, and this has led many historians to tell their readers that Lollardism became extinct in the first part of the fifteenth century. But look beneath the surface! In the eastern shires, the future home of the Pilgrimfathers and many of the New England Puritans, an earnest peasantry lived, and noble craftsmen, that refused to be hectored into silence and a false complaisance, that placed the sovereignty of their God above the abused sovereignty of man. Conventicles of "Bible men" were held in secret. The Bible, translated from the Latin into the English tongue by Wyclif himself, continued to be read. "The spirit of Lollardy," says the Rev. M. Creighton, in a somewhat reserved way, "survived, to some extent, among the people; and the spark was readily kindled by the flame of Luther's rising against the Pope."* And Douglas Campbell, quoting Fiske, gives the information to his readers, that Longland, bishop of Lincoln, made a report in the year 1520, to the effect that Lollardism was still very strong and obdurate in his bishopric and that in the course of but one church visitation no less than two hundred of its adherents had been brought before him.† It hardly seems right to speak of a party as "extinct," when nearly a century after the time referred to such statements can be made by a distinguished churchman!

The Lollards were the forerunners of Pilgrimfathers and Puritans. Their influence upon the church, upon the state, upon society, and in the sphere of education, was beneficial and lasting.

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*Schaff's Rel. Encycl., vl. II, p. 1340.

†Campbell, Puritans, Holl. Ed., vl. 1, p. 484.

In church-life they were instrumental in preparing people for that bold step which Henry VIII was about to take, the breaking away from Rome. By their continued protests against the transubstantiation-view, against exorcisms, benedictions of lifeless objects, special prayers for the dead, celibacy, auricular confession, pilgrimages, the worship of saints, the temporal power of the clergy, the monastic orders, the supreme authority of the Pope, and many other views and usages, they prepared the way for the Reformation proper. But they did more than that. They liberated, by these continued protests, the *spirit* of the people. The chains of superstition, that cramped the English soul,—that the Roman hierarchy, to save itself, had drawn ever tighter, —they were strained to the utmost by this Lollardist action, until at last they burst with a clang.

This liberation of the national soul in matters of religion was not only important from an ecclesiastical or spiritual, but also from a more secular viewpoint. It meant liberation also in things pertaining to man's temporal conditions. For England, be it well understood, was in the times that immediately preceded the Reformation not such a free and democratic nation as many writers would have us believe. We are all familiar with the Magna Charta, the Common Law, the thirteenth century House of Commons,—"the archetype of all the representative assemblies which now meet," —and we have had able writers and distinguished orators tell us, until we hardly dared to think different, that here, in these documents and institutions of old England, the *source of American freedom* must be found. So far as we know, these sweeping statements have never been challenged, unless Bancroft's pointed remarks be taken as such: "The Middle Age had been familiar with charters and constitutions; but they had been merely

compacts for immunities, partial enfranchisements, patents of nobility, concessions of municipal privileges, or limitations of the sovereign power in favor of feudal institutions.''*

American freedom—and this is a freedom of a very specific type—does not find its origin in the social and political conditions of mediæval England. American democracy is not the product of the ''old Anglo-Saxon spirit.''

There *was* no popular liberty in old England! There *was* no democratic spirit among the Saxons and Normans! There may, at the most, have been a semblance of it. Even the fact that, at the dawn of English history, freemen used to gather among the inhabitants of the island for the purpose of electing their warrior-chieftains,—it does not substantiate the claim that our national spirit of freedom and democracy is originally Anglosaxon. For these freemen formed only a part of the population. A large share of the people were in bonds of slavery. There may have been a spirit of personal liberty—but only among the freemen. Nero of Rome also believed in personal liberty! So did every Roman citizen. But in that very same Roman empire class-distinctions were drawn most punctiliously, and thousands of white slaves crowded the markets!

Of genuine democracy not a trace could be found in old England—not even at the time when Christianity was introduced among the Saxons, centuries after their first appearance in the light of history. For what is democracy? What is *American* democracy? Is it not that which we find expressed in those noble words, known to every American child—''We hold these truths to be self-evident:—That all men are created equal; that

*Bancroft, vl. I, p. 310.

they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.''?* This kind of democracy is essentially different from that would-be kind which ancient Britain harbored. And if, these arguments notwithstanding, it is still maintained that the political rights of the Anglosaxon freemen at least *led up* to the real kind of democracy, as we know it, then let us point to the historically substantiated facts, that these early political rights of the islanders never became a vital factor in practical life, that in the course of the later Middle Ages their significance constantly dwindled, and that when finally the Tudors came to the throne their last remains sunk into a grave of total oblivion. In the seventh and eighth century whatever government was found among the Saxons was decidedly despotic in character, and such a patriotic Englishman and profound student as Macaulay deems it an unmixed blessing for the uncouth hords of islanders that the priestly aristocracy of Rome gained a foothold amongst them. ''That which in an age of good government—we quote the famous historian—is an evil, may, in an age of grossly bad government, be a blessing. It is better that mankind should be governed by wise laws well administered, and by an enlightened public opinion, than by priestcraft: but it is better that men should be governed by priestcraft than by brute violence, by such a prelate as Dunstan than by such a warrior as Penda. A society, sunk in ignorance, and ruled by mere physical force, has great reason to rejoice when a class, of which the influence is intellectual and moral, rises to ascendency. . . .We read in our Saxon chronicles of tyrants, who, when at the height of greatness, were smitten with re-

*Declaration of Independence.

morse. . . .''* Under Egbert, a pupil of Charlemagne, father of the feudal system, no change of importance came about. King Alfred's reformatory movements, laudable in themselves, brought no real democracy. Gradually the old government of the people (which had never been a government *of, for, and by the people*) became an ''oligarchy of the most exclusive type.''† Slavery increased on a large scale. It is reported that some ''freemen'' gained riches by breeding slaves for the market. Not until the time of the Normans was this slavetrade effectually suppressed. After the Norman conquest, in 1066, the baronage flourished. At the death of King Steven eleven-hundred-and-fifteen castles were found upon the island. Peasants were degraded by the barons to the level of the swine and oxen which they tended.‡ It can, of course, not be denied that a general and important advance in civilization took place as a result of the Norman conquest, but no radical change in social and political relations was effected. The much-heralded Magna Charta was obtained in the interest of the barons; it set a limit to royal prerogatives, but only to increase those of the petty monarchs with which the country abounded. According to Gneist transgressions of the Magna Charta rules were plentiful, so that before the end of the Middle ages no less than thirty-eight times confirmation of the document was sought and granted. Even the efforts of Simon de Montfort, who summoned a parliament in 1265, and of Edward I, who summoned another parliament in 1295, prove nothing as to the growth of democratic ideas. In

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*Macaulay, History of England, vl. I, p. 18.

†Green, Short Hist., p. 89, etc., and Gneist, vl. I, p. 101, etc., cited by Campbell, Puritans, vl. I, p. 290.

‡Macaulay, Hist., vl. I, p. 33.

these representative assemblies the *people* were not represented. It was only five years before Edward's parliament convened, in 1290, that all the Jews were banished from England. Sixteen-thousand of Abraham's children after the flesh were robbed of all their property and sent across the Channel. Part of them were murdered by Englishmen before they reached the French shore. This could hardly be called democracy, freedom, toleration, as we Americans conceive of it!

The following century brought a change—for the worse! No age in the entire history of England, a favorite English writer* tells us, was so dark and dreary as the age that preceded Jeanne d'Arc. The cities were governed by an high-born and proud aristocracy. Thousands of vassals, that had started the climb on the social ladder, were hurled down into misery and degradation, into abject slavery. Political freedom was wellnigh lost altogether, our English writer tells us. We say: it never existed! But that which perhaps was a semblance of it was in this century trodden under foot, —even that!

In the age that followed, the age preceding the Reformation, a further step was taken in the direction of aristocracy and despotism. Only those whose land netted a profit of forty shillings per annum might henceforth vote for members of Parliament. That meant a government of the rich and by the rich and for the rich. That meant naked aristocracy and uncurbed despotism. Whatever freedom England had known, opines Campbell, had been based on the power of the great barons, who, in order to assure their own rights, had been forced to protect those of their weaker allies. The war of the Roses destroyed everyone of the milder features of feu-

*Green, Short Hist., p. 240, cited by Campbell, vl. I, p. 309.

dalism. The foremost peers had been slain; the lesser lords were frightened into submission. A middle class arose, but the *people* were forgotten. Nothing else could be expected but an unlimited exercise of royal power, and this situation of affairs continued until Puritanism, in the reign of Charles I, raised the banner of freedom, and effected a radical change.*

We here repeat what we stated before, that it was the Lollards by whose continued action the process of true liberation was begun,—of liberation in the church, in the state, in society, in the sphere of education. It was the Calvinism of the Lollards that caused the seeds of real freedom to be sown on English soil. It was Calvinism that afterwards fostered and maintained this freedom. Without Calvinism—we shall have ample opportunity to prove this in other chapters—constitutional liberty and social equity would again have disappeared after they had been brought about, and England would again have become the toy of high-born politicians and an irresponsible autocracy.

The seeds of freedom, sown by the Calvinistic Lollards, sprouted but slowly. Campbell could justly say that it was the powerful strokes of *Puritanism* (the second form in which English Calvinism revealed itself) by which the giant of despotism was felled. Yet, even the Lollardist action produced some very tangible results. Its influence upon church life we have already made mention of. The road was cleared, in a good measure, for the Reformation proper. In political life the eyes of even the meanest vassal were opened; he saw things in a new light. He learned the art of self-expression, and the Peasants' Rising under Wat Tyler, in 1381, and the Oldcastle "conspiracy," in which an

*Campbell, Puritans, vl. I, p. 314.

hundred thousand Lollards were involved, showed unmistakably to what degree of perfection this art had been brought, both in words and in deeds. Undoubtedly mistakes have been made by some of these men. We shall not try to palliate them. Freedom, coming of a sudden to a born slave, intoxicates. Taken on the whole, however, the action of the Lollards, also in the realm of politics, had a most salutary effect. Man began to realize his own individual worth over against the many and multifarious despots of the age. Was he not the image-bearer of God? Was not the believer a viceroy—under Christ? Was not all earthly power derivative in character, and was not every ruler responsible unto God?

That these sublime ideas, once settled in the hearts of peasant and craftsman, could not but make their influence felt also in the sphere of social life certainly needs no amplification. These ideas were *bound* to make man feel different towards his fellow-man. If John the serf was as well an image-bearer of God and could as well belong to God's chosen ones as the mighty thane whose herd he kept, could there still be an *essential* difference between the two? The Calvinism that took lodgment in the Anglosaxon soul struck at the very roots of the caste-system, as no Common-law-principles or Magna Charta-maxims had been able to do in the past. The mere courage that it took, to attack the strong autocratic system of the Middle Ages with protest after protest, ought to be sufficient testimony. Never, before the rise of the Lollards, had such protests been made. From no place in England, except the shires in which the Lollards resided, did such protests come.

Not much need be said of what the Lollards accomplished in the interest of a general education. Everyone that has studied the history of pre-Reformation

times, be it only in a cursory way, knows that nothing has contributed so much to the intellectual development of the commonalty as the reading of the Bible. One of the most important things that Wyclif accomplished was the translation of the Bible into the vernacular. Wyclif's Bible has been an educational means of great importance, notwithstanding the fact that it was afterwards superseded by Tyndale's translation of the Scriptures. Moreover, the truly Calvinistic aphorism, that he who knows best can serve best, should be remembered in this connection. To the mind of a Calvinist God wants to be served in His own way. The Calvinist, therefore, wants to know the *how*. He looks for that knowledge in Scripture and in nature. And this, for him, is by far the greatest incentive to research and study.

The Lollards carried on their research with the same purpose in mind. They looked for the *truth*, because they knew that their God could be served only in the ways of truth, and because they realized the spiritual and natural significance of Jesus' words, that only the truth could make them free. The reader will at this juncture call to mind the splendid words of Froude, which we have quoted in full in our Introduction, that "Calvinism was the spirit which rises in revolt against untruth."

The practical effect of this "spirit" in the field of education will become evident as we go on. Suffice it to say, here and now, that until the year 1382 the great University of Oxford was the chief center of the Lollardist teaching, and that even after the Archbishop Courtenay's proceedings against the followers of Wyclif a strong academical party remained in existence. Such eminent scholars as Nicholas Hereford and Peter Payne were among the Lollard teachers of this time.

JOHN CALVIN AND ENGLISH REFORMATORY MOVEMENTS

CHAPTER II.

JOHN CALVIN AND ENGLISH REFORMATORY MOVEMENTS

BEFORE we proceed to trace the further development of Calvinistic ideas and ideals in the English mother-country it may not be amiss to state, already at this place, that in England Wyclif's aim was never fully reached. Calvinism was never given a chance on the British Isles to show its full strength. There has been a strong Calvinistic movement here, and the crest of this movement we find in the days of the great Protector, but Calvinism's ideals were never completely realized. The rockbound shores of New England, the primeval forests of America, were to become the place where the seeds, sown by Wyclif and the Lollards, would develop into a luxuriant growth, never again to be eradicated.

It will be necessary, however, to find out just how this New England growth came about and what the elements were that fostered it, and for that reason we must needs ask our readers to tarry with us in the old world for yet a little while.

When the first of the Tudors, Henry VII, departed from this life, Lollardism continued to have a strong hold upon the people of north-eastern England. The testimony of Bishop Longland, quoted in the former chapter, proves this to a sufficient extent. Under Henry VIII, the years of whose reign are from 1509 to 1547, rumors of the Lutheran reformation trickled into England, and they were received with an appreciative feeling, not only among the Lollards, but also among those of the new learning. It was the age or Erasmus, More, and

Colet. Says Macaulay of this period,—"Knowledge gradually spread among laymen. At the commencement of the sixteenth century many of them were in every intellectual attainment fully equal to the most enlightened of their spiritual pastors."*

It was in the same year of the accession of Henry VIII that on the plains of Picardy, in the city of Noyon, where only recently one of the bloodiest of the world's battles was fought, the great Reformer of Geneva was born—Jean Cauvin.†

It has been rightly said and oftentimes repeated by historians that " the Reformation in England, especially in its earlier stage, was of a political character." The refusal of pope Clement VII to sanction the divorce-proceedings of Henry VIII—a refusal based upon political considerations—led to the renunciation of the pope as head of the English church. The king himself took the pope's place and was styled, in 1531, by a convocation of priests and prelates, "The Protector and Supreme Head of the Church and Clergy of England." One of the loyal supporters of the king in these politico-ecclesiastical proceedings was Thomas Cranmer, who was made archbishop of Canterbury in 1533, and of whom we shall hear anon.

That the so-called English liberties, about which we have heard and read so much, were rather chimerical, the reign of Henry VIII proves. Historical veracity demands unvarnished language: this king was one of the most despotic, self-willed, vacillating, and cruel monarchs that ever trod British soil. His political and ecclesiastical measures were decidedly oppressive in character. Bishops, ordinary clergymen, and temporal officers, were

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*Macaulay, Hist. of Engl. vl. I, p. 53.

†The French form of Calvin's name.

toys that he played with. The good people were treated like dumb chattel that could be bartered, sold, and removed at the sovereign's bidding.

As has been the case so often, however, the brutal action of the king caused a salutary reaction of no mean importance. The common people, especially in the Lollard shires, rebelled. "The doctrines of Wyclif," says a recent writer, "were finding their way into the hearts of the common people, and free Englishmen refused submission to the king's persecuting edicts."* The Act of Supremacy, by which parliament had given to the king absolute control over their confession, their church, and their consciences, was to them as obnoxious and unbearable as a papal encyclic.

And these common people were not destitute of daring spokesmen. Hugh Latimer, afterwards bishop of Worcester, spoke with boldness before the face of the king. On December 1, 1530, he wrote to the king, and pleaded "for the restoring again of the free liberty of reading" the Bible. Fiske tells his readers, "To the Englishmen who listened to Latimer . . . the Bible more than filled the place which in modern times is filled by poem and essay, by novel and newspaper and scientific treatise." † Latimer, therefore, was battling for a worthy cause when he made his bold plea before the king. He championed the free use of the Bible, the greatest educational means of the age, the source of all Calvinistic views and doctrines.

John Hooper was another champion of religious liberty at this time and has been referred to as "the father of Puritanism in its incipient form." Tyndale and John Frith also deserve mention as staunch de-

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*Thompson, Religious Foundations of America, p. 106.
†John Fiske, Beginnings, p. 55.

fenders of the Bible. Tyndale's translation of the Scriptures contributed a great deal towards the propagation of Calvinistic views among the peasants and craftsmen of England. His evangelical writings found their way into the humblest cottage. Says an authority on English versions, "As an apostle of liberty, Tyndale stands foremost among the writers of the period, whose heroic fortitude and invincible love of the truth were heard with a force superior to royal and ecclesiastical injunctions; and the very flames to which fanaticism and tyranny consigned his writings burnt them into the very hearts of the people, and made them powerful instruments in attaching and converting multitudes to the principles of the Reformation; and it is not exaggeration to say, that the noble sentiments of William Tyndale, uttered in pure, strong Saxon English, and steeped in the doctrines of the Gospel, gave shape to the views of the more conspicuous promoters of that grand movement, who, like himself, sealed their convictions with their blood." *

When Edward VI took his royal father's place, in 1547, the reformatory movement began to show important results. At this juncture it must again be borne in mind that Henry VIII, by his breaking away from Rome, did not bring the real Reformation into England. That was but a political move. The true Reformation in England finds its starting-point in the Lollard circles, and is fostered by rumors concerning the Reformation-on-the-continent, by more extensive reading of the Bible, by the oppressive measures of Henry VIII, which incited reaction, and by the writings and orations of such men as Latimer, Hooper, Tyndale, Frith, and numerous others. At this time the old Lollard shires were the

*J. I. Mombert, Schaff's Enc., vl. III, p. 2411.

stronghold of the Reformation, and they became such in an ever increasing measure.

King Edward, although but a boy, was piously attached to the Protestant faith. Cranmer, whose timid nature caused him to take a far from heroic stand under Henry VIII, was now ready to avow Protestantism. It was the Calvinistic type of Protestantism that he gradually came to stand for. Calvin himself influenced the British primate, both directly and indirectly, to a great extent. Of this influence more anon.

The Book of Common Prayer and the Articles of Religion were published in the middle of the sixteenth century under the direction of king Edward himself, while Cranmer acted as the king's adviser. They clearly show the trend of the Reformation in England at this time, and unmistakably reveal the old Wyclifite, Loldardistic spirit, which had during so many generations clamored for an expression in documentary form. A catechism was also promulgated by the king, and all schoolmasters were required to use it. It also was distinctly Calvinistic. Macaulay's remark holds true even at this early time,—"Her (the Church of England's) doctrinal confessions and discourses, composed by Protestants, set forth principles of theology in which Calvin or Knox would have found scarcely a word to disapprove." *

While Calvinism was thus gaining headway in king Edward's dominions, the principal defender of the same, Calvin himself, had reached the zenith of his activities.

Calvin was born in 1509, in Picardy, that French province which had produced, centuries before Calvin, the fiery and eloquent Peter of Amiens, of Crusade fame, and which was to give to the world, centuries after Cal-

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* Macaulay, History, vl. I, p. 57.

vin, such brilliant and daring revolutionists as Condorcet, Desmoulins, and Baboeuf. The future reformer's own life, his association with the Montmor children, the instruction of Cordier, the doctrinal tenets of LeFèvre, the ecclesiastical skirmishes at Paris, the friendship of Olivetanus, the instruction of Melchior Wolmar, the questionable practices of the Roman Catholic church,—all these things had co-operated in changing the Roman Catholic child into a Calvinistic man. In 1533, when he wrote the famous address for his friend Cop, the die appeared to have been cast, and cast irrevocably. The titan among reformers had been born.

Calvin's extensive and thorough knowledge of the classics, his close acquaintance with the original Bible languages, his great familiarity with the scholastics, enabled him to get a broad view of the world and its problems and gave him the finest tools for an exhaustive exegesis of the Scriptures. Humanism, with Calvin, was placed in the service of the Reformation.* The juridical education which he had been the grateful recipient of enabled him to see, clearly and distinctly, that fundamental truth of his system, the absolute sovereignty of God. His profound faith made him feel near unto his God and filled his soul with a Stephanic courage. Yes, he had his foibles, and he himself has been the first to admit it. But we are glad that we are now in a position to state that the personal character of the Reformer of Geneva was not half as defective and corrupt as a multitude of historians would have us believe,—thanks to the painstaking research of Professor E. Doumergue, of Montauban, in France.

A refugee from his home country, the young Calvin at last took up his abode in Geneva, by the sparkling

*Bavinck, Johannes Calvyn, p. 7.

waters of Lake Leman. Of this Bancroft tells his readers, concisely,—"A young French refugee, skilled alike in theology and civil law, in the duties of magistrates and the dialectics of religious controversy, entering the republic of Geneva, and conforming its ecclesiastical discipline to the principles of republican simplicity, established a party, of which Englishmen became members, and New England the asylum. The enfranchisement of the human mind from religious despotism led directly to inquiries into the nature of civil government."*

Hardly could the young Frenchman have found a more centrally located place,—a place in which he could remain in better contact with the nations of the world. According to Eugène Choisy, Geneva was a gathering place for Frenchmen, Germans, and Italians, even before May 21, 1536, when the general council of the city solemnly pledged itself "to live according to the holy law of the Gospel and of the Word of God."† And after Calvin continued the work Farel had begun, that is, after August, 1536, the old city of Geneva became "the center of the religious and political life of the nations of Western Europe."‡ When Calvin entered Geneva he had just published his standard work, the Institutes of the Christian Religion. Never afterwards did he make a radical departure from any of the doctrines propounded in this work. The fundamental tenets of Calvinism are given in it, and are expounded in a systematic and extremely brilliant form. Says John Fiske, in connection with this subject, after having criticised Calvin's personality in an unfair way (unintentionally so, we sur-

*Bancroft, History U. S., vl. I, ps. 266, 267.

†Choisy, La Theocratie etc., cited by Koffyberg, Internationale Strekking, p. 3.

‡Koffyberg, Internationale Strekking, p. 3.

mise, thru lack of sufficient information),— "... It would be hard to overrate the debt which mankind owes to Calvin. The spiritual father of Coligny, of William the Silent, and of Cromwell, must occupy a foremost rank among the champions of modern democracy ... The promulgation of his theology was one of the longest steps that mankind has taken toward personal freedom. Calvinism left the individual man alone in the presence of his God. ..Calvin did not originate these doctrines; in announcing them he was but setting forth, as he said, the Institutes of the Christian religion; but in emphasizing this aspect of Christianity (that all men are alike before God), in engraving it upon men's minds with that keen-edged logic which he used with such unrivalled skill, Calvin made them feel, as it had perhaps never been felt before, the dignity and importance of the individual human soul. It was a religion fit to inspire men who were to be called upon to fight for freedom, whether in the marshes of the Netherlands or on the moors of Scotland."*

To this eloquent tribute not much need be added at this juncture. If the reader has been patient and kind enough to peruse the Introduction of this work, he will admit the truthfulness of Mr. Fiske's remarks. Surely, also the Institutes had its shortcomings, its mistakes. Calvin was not "Calvinistic," in the full sense of that word, when he held that it was "the duty of the government to extirpate every form of false religion and idolatry." Yet—do not condemn this stand of the Genevan Reformer in too harsh and unfriendly terms! Do not fling your accusations in this matter at his immediate followers without having given yourself at least a moment's time for reflection and meditation! It is

*Fiske, Beginnings, ps. 58, 59.

necessary that we serve this admonition,—necessary also to preserve the integrity of the character of our own American forefathers. The remarks of Dr. Abraham Kuyper are to the point in this connection: "A system," says this greatest of present day Calvinists, "is not known by what it has in common with other preceding systems; but. . .is distinguished by that in which it differs from those preceding systems. The duty of the government to extirpate every form of false religion and idolatry was not a find of Calvinism, but dates from Constantine the Great, and was the reaction against the horrible persecutions which his pagan predecessors on the Imperial throne had inflicted upon the sect of the Nazarene. Since that day this system had been defended by all Romish theologians and applied by all Christian princes. In the time of Luther and Calvin it was an universal conviction that that system was the true one. Every famous theologian of the period, Melanchthon first of all, approved of the death by fire of Servetus; and the scaffold which was erected by the Lutherans at Leipzig for Krell, the thorough Calvinist, was infinitely more reprehensible, when looked at from a Protestant standpoint.

"But whilst the Calvinists, in the age of the Reformation, yielded their victims by tens of thousands to the scaffold and the stake (those of the Lutherans and Roman Catholics being hardly worth counting) history has been guilty of the great and far-reaching unfairness of ever casting in their teeth this one execution by fire of Servetus, as a 'crimen nefandum.'

"Notwithstanding all this I do not only deplore that one stake, but I unconditionally disapprove of it; yet not as if it were the expression of a special characteristic of Calvinism, but on the contrary as the fatal after-

effect of a system, grey with age, which Calvinism found in existence, under which it had grown up, and from which it had not yet been able entirely to liberate itself.''*

That even Calvin himself did not regard his Institutes as an altogether perfect creation appears, moreover, when one compares some of his later works with the standard production of 1536. At the beginning of his career the Reformer was hardly in accord with a full-fledged democratic government, but in later years (in the commentary on Michah, f. i.) he showed a remarkable sympathy towards this particular species of government. He then favored ''representative government by common consent,'' and with great boldness wrote, ''Even when men become kings by hereditary right this does not seem consistent with liberty.''† We mention this only for an example.

Yet the Institutes was by far the greatest book of the century, and thru it the Calvinistic principles were propagated on an immense scale. If the writing of this book had been Calvin's only deed, his name would already have gone down into history as that of the world's greatest Reformer, and John Adams, the second president of the United States, might have exclaimed with equal emphasis, ''Let not Geneva be forgotten or despised. Religious liberty owes it much respect, Servetus notwithstanding.''‡

Considering the further influence that the Genevan Reformer exerted upon England at this time, we must, first of all, call the reader's attention to the hundreds of personal letters that Calvin wrote to nearly all quar-

* Kuyper, Calvinism, ps. 128, 129.

† Foster, Am. Hist. Review, April, 1916.

‡Adams, Works VI, p. 315, cited by Foster, Am. Hist. Rev., April, 1916.

ters of Europe. A modern student of Calvinism writes of "countless letters," which Calvin sent to influential men and women of his time,—to France, England, Scotland, Germany, Poland, and Hungary,—letters that proved to be of the utmost importance "for the religious and national life of these different countries and peoples."* This same student calls Calvin "the greatest international educator that ever lived."† The "Thesaurus Epistolicus Calvinianus" contains an enormous amount of material, and shows how central a figure Calvin was for many decades. Calvin's best biographer, Prof. Doumergue, tells of "streams of messengers and letters, coming to Calvin from Alsace, England, Poland, and Russia."‡ Calvin communicated with Edward VI of England, the Duke of Somerset, and many others, and at many times received presents from these lofty personages. When King Edward had written a book, he sent to Calvin, asking the Reformer's advice about the same.

Calvin's influence was enhanced by means of the religious conferences which he attended. Among these the Colloquium of Regensburg may be mentioned, held in 1541, at which representatives of Germany, Italy, Venice, England, and Portugal, were found.

Of the spread of Calvin's books and those of his immediate followers a little more must be said. The transformative influence of many of these works, also in England, was tremendous, and it is due to a serious lack in the majority of historical accounts that we have not realized this fact in the past. The Institutes enjoyed an almost unrivalled popularity. Before the Puri-

*Koffyberg, Internationale Strekking, etc., p. 4.
†Idem.
‡Doumergue, Calvin in Geneva, p. 403, Holl. Ed.

tan emigration to New England at least 74 editions of this book had been published, besides 14 abridgments, —and all these in 9 different languages.* "Of some work of Calvin at least 435 editions appeared before the founding of New England, an average of one every ten weeks."† The Geneva Bible also was extremely popular. This Bible contained a veritable treasure of marginal notes, dealing with religious, political, and social questions. Before 1617 this English translation of the Scriptures appeared in no less than 100 editions. This Bible, with its marginal notes, brought Calvinism into every Protestant home in England. The Geneva Bible was a favorite with the later Pilgrims and Puritans.

As to other Calvinistic books of this time—Geneva produced them almost as fast as they could be absorbed. In 1558 eight political addresses were printed in Geneva, written by Englishmen and addressed to England and Scotland. The strongly democratic utterances in these addresses gained Calvin's personal endorsement. Two years earlier Ponet, exiled bishop of Winchester, a Calvinist, published his "Politike Powers" in Geneva,—a work of which John Adams said, "It contains all the essential principles of liberty which were afterwards dilated on by Sidney and Locke." The influence of the writings of Beza, Calvin's right hand, also was great and lasting, not only in England, but in later years even in America. The Englishman Whitgift complained to Beza that thru the spread of Beza's various publications democracy would be brought to England. To obtain an idea of the amazing spread of Beza's works, we need but call attention to the fact

*Foster, Am. Hist. Rev., April, 1916.
†Idem.

that Beza's Latin testament, which taught political Calvinism thru its many annotations, passed thru a new edition every year for a considerable length of time, and that "some one of his works appeared in English dress semi-annually for half a century." Says Mr. Foster, "Scores of Calvinistic writers, either Genevan-bred or directly influenced by men who had been in Geneva, (there were), whose books—listed by hundreds in American colonial libraries and quoted by publicists of two continents and three centuries—thru their combined and continued influence permanently affected the political thought and action of England and America."*

At Cambridge university Calvinism soon gained the upper hand, and also at Oxford Calvin's tenets were popularized and advocated. "The divines of Oxford," thus Neal informs us, "and, indeed, *all* the first Reformers, were in the same sentiments with those of Cambridge about the disputed points, *Calvin's Institutions being read publicly in the schools by appointment of the Convocation.*"†

The influence exerted upon English life and thought by Calvinistic writings was strengthened and widened by Calvinistic men, that came to reside on the British Islands. Space does not allow us to mention the names of many English students that attended the academy at Geneva, and that afterwards returned to their home country, their minds and hearts filled with Calvinism. Men like Des Gallars, Utenhoven, and A Lasco, may not be passed by, however, without at least passing mention. Des Gallars, one of Calvin's secretaries, was repeatedly sent to England in the interest of the Prot-

*The quotations in this paragraph can be found in Am. Hist. Rev., April '16., Art. Calvinism.

†Neal, Puritans, vl. I, p. 210.

estant churches in that country. While there he remained in contact with his spiritual father, Calvin himself, by means of a continued correspondence. In 1563 Bishop Grindal wrote to Calvin that the labors of his disciple on the British Islands had been productive of much fruit.* Utenhove, A Lasco, and also Micron, were prominent Calvinistic leaders in England at this time. They were connected with the church of the Dutch and Flemish refugees in London, and labored strenuously in the interest of Calvinism. "Thru Utenhove Calvin exerted a great influence upon the Reformation in England," asserts the Rev. Westerbeek van Eerten.† "From 1549 on Utenhove has continuously attempted to have Calvin exert a controlling influence upon the English Reformation," claims Dr. F. Pyper in his Biography of Utenhove.‡ And so far as A Lasco is concerned, a prominent Polish theologian and a friend of Bullinger and Calvin,—in England he was able to bring about what he could not accomplish on the continent: the formation of a truly Calvinistic church, which has afterwards served as an example to many other churches, both in England and on the continent.

Thru these various channels Calvin "exerted a great influence upon the English ecclesiastical movement."¶ And this influence continued to be felt thruout the sixteenth century. The English Reformation as a whole was Calvinistic from start to finish. Geneva provided a continual source of strength and spiritual enthusiasm, and especially the fact—not mentioned by us hitherto—

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*Doumergue, Calvin and Geneva, p. 445, and Rutgers, Calvyn's Invloed, etc., p. 181, 182.

†Westerbeek van Eerten, Anabaptisme en Calvinisme, p. 206.

‡Rutgers, Calvyn's Invloed, etc., p. 133, quoting Pyper.

¶Idem, p. 236, quoting Prof. P. J. Blok, Hist. of the Dutch People.

that in Geneva itself an English church had been established and that this church, composed of leading Englishmen, remained in constant connection with the home country, kept the fires of Calvinism in England burning, and prepared this country ever more for the grand Puritanic outburst of the seventeenth century.

Thomas Cartwright, one of the chief Calvinistic leaders in England, was professor of theology in the school of Calvin previous to his important career on the Islands, and imbibed the principles of the Genevan Reformer to such an extent, that when he returned to the country from which he had been exiled he became an untiring advocate of the Genevan (Presbyterian) church-form, at the same time maintaining that the form of the state should be like unto that of the church. In his famous "Admonition to Parliament" he gave utterance to these views. This document was in later years quoted by Hooker of Connecticut and by Cotton of Massachusetts.*

Because the religious and political life of England was to a certain extent influenced by that of Scotland, it may not be amiss, at this place, to mention the name of John Knox, whose personal contact with Calvin fanned the holy fire that was burning in his soul and caused him to become the great Reformer of Scotland. It was this fiery zealot for Calvinism, this true-blooded Scotchman, that once upon a time dared to tell Mary Stuart, Queen of the Scots, in her very face, that the aim of his labors was, "to have both kings and subjects obey God." In 1560 the Scottish Parliament enacted a law by which Calvinistic Protestantism became the established religion

*Splendid information concerning the Genevan church can be obtained from a work by Chas. Martin: Les Protestants Anglais rèfugiés, etc. Geneva, 1915.

of Scotland. And to prove that the government did nothing but reflect the attitude of the Scottish church, the singularly interesting fact may be mentioned that on a certain occasion the Scottish church assembly, when about ready to reach an important decision, deferred the final vote in order to send to Geneva and ask for Calvin's personal opinion. Afterwards the vote was cast, and in accordance with the opinion of the great Genevan. The close relations that existed between England and Scotland could not but cause a steady influence to be exerted by the little kingdom of the north upon the larger realm in the south.

When Mary Stuart, in 1553, succeeded Edward VI on the English throne, a reactionary process was begun in the ecclesiastico-political world. Mary was as strong and stubborn a Roman Catholic as Edward had been a Protestant, and the result was that hundreds of leading Calvinists fled to the continent and other hundreds perished by the sword and by the stake. The aged Cranmer was one of the first victims. Wavering though this prominent government official had been in regard to his confession on many an occasion, vacillating though his attitude had been in regard to reformatory ideals, he died a penitent Calvinist and by his very death spoke concerning the truths of Calvinism with a voice, a clarion voice, that resounded thru the ages. At times Cranmer had been willing to submit himself to the personal guidance of Calvin, especially in connection with the Articles of Religion. Cranmer, as was stated above, in turn acted as King Edward's adviser.

Together with Cranmer men like Latimer, Hooper, and Ridley, were called upon to give evidence of their faith by the shedding of their life-blood. But these were

Calvinists, that is, they were men of steel and iron! Hooper smiled when he saw the stake. Latimer, already enveloped by the flames, shouted to Ridley, who was sharing his faith, "Play the man, Master Ridley, —we shall this day light up such a candle, by God's grace, in England, as I trust shall never be put out!"

While Mary was busy murdering these loyal Englishmen, hosts of other Englishmen, as has already been stated, fled the country. They went to Strassburg, Zurich, Frankfort, and Geneva. If these men were Calvinists when they left their country, they certainly were in a double measure when they returned, at the end of Queen Mary's reign. In Germany the Lutherans turned their backs to them, and even abused them in certain instances. The Calvinistic brethren, however, received the refugees with love and gladness of heart. Naturally this would strengthen the ties of fellowship between the Calvinists of England and those of the continent. The English Calvinists, moreover, beheld a form of church government on the continent that differed much more radically from the Roman system than did King Edward's Protestant churches, and they made up their mind that upon their return to England they would surely introduce further changes, making their churches as nearly like the Apostolic pattern as they could. Besides, a genuine democratic spirit was imbibed by these refugees, the real spirit of Calvinism, which was to reveal itself before many decades had past by in connection with the brutal usurpation of powers by the English Stuarts.

"In the Calvinistic system laymen took a responsible part in the selection of the clergy and in the management of the affairs of the church," says Prof. Fisher. "The privilege of governing themselves, which they enjoyed in the Christian society, they would soon claim in the commonwealth." But what should have been placed

first Prof. Fisher has inserted *after* the foregoing statements: "Nor was the pervading principle of Calvin's theology—the idea of the sovereignty of God—without an influence in the same direction. In comparison with that Almighty Ruler, upon whose will the lives and fortunes of men depended, all earthly potentates sank into insignificance. At the same time the dignity of the individual was enhanced by the consciousness that he was chosen of God."*

The larger number of English exiles had gone to Frankfort. This city was at that time a gathering place for refugees from different countries. Walloons, Hollanders, and Englishmen, found a resting-place here. Yet, the resting-place was not altogether a place of rest. There were divisions and internal skirmishes of every sort, and men like Johann von Glauburg, Petrus Dathenus, Gasper van der Heyden, A Lasco, and others of great repute, were unable to quiet the troubled waters. This inability on the part of the leaders caused a continued correspondence with Calvin and even brought about a personal visit of the reformer to the city on the Main. Calvin's visit took place in 1556, exactly at the time when the English exiles had taken up their abode in the German city.† The English exiles, already somewhat divided on the question of church liturgy when they arrived in Frankfort, caught the warlike spirit that was so strongly in evidence here and saw their division becoming more and more pronounced. But these Frankfort troubles, disagreeable though they were, contained the germ of one of the greatest movements in history. Neal expresses it very plainly,—"The exiles

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*Fisher, Hist. of Chr. Church, ps. 329, 330.

†A great deal of trustworthy information in connection with the Frankfort churches can be obtained from Rutgers, Calvyn's Invloed, etc.

were most numerous at Frankfort, where that contest and division began which gave rise to the Puritans.''* The contest, then, was chiefly about the form of worship, the one party conforming to King Edward's Book of Worship—hence the name ''Conformists''—and the other party desiring what they deemed the pure and Biblical form of worship—hence the name ''Non-conformists,'' or ''Puritans.'' The latter party was strengthened by letters from Calvin. The reformer told them to relinquish everything that still smacked of Rome, and to adhere, purely and simply, to the Bible. But there was another Calvinistic principle back of this section. A feeling arose against governmental control in church affairs. In a more or less unconscious way separation of church and state was aimed at. These Puritans felt as it were intuitively that the existing relations between church and state were not in accordance with their belief. Dr. Priestley expresses this in a very felicitous way,—''Our ancestors, the old Puritans, had the same merit in opposing the imposition of the surplice that Hampden had in opposing the levying of ship-money. In neither case was the thing itself objected to so much (although this too—see above) as the authority that enjoined it, and the danger of the precedent. And it appears to us that the man who is as tenacious of his religious as he is of his civil liberty, will oppose them both with equal firmness.''†

Viewing the matter in that light, the reader will at once realize that what seems at first glance but ''petty squabbles'' might have tremendous consequences. And these consequences actually did reveal themselves. ''The petty squabbles of the English exiles, transplanted to

*Neal, Puritans, vl. I, p. 66.

†Priestley, View of the Principles and Conduct of the Prot. Dissenters, p. 66.

England, grew into bitter feuds and brought forth persecutions and political struggles. The settlement of New England, the battles of Marston Moor and Naseby, the temporary overthrow of the English monarchy, the growth of non-conformity, the modification of the English constitution and of all English life, were germinally present in the differences between the exiles at Zurich and those at Geneva, and in the squabbles of Cox and Knox, of Whithead and Horne, at Frankfort-on-the-Main, about gowns and litanies and the authority of the priest. It is not often that a great historical movement can be traced through a single rill to its rise at the fountain head.''*

On the death of Queen Mary, in November, 1558, the Puritans came back to England in large numbers. They were determined to continue their work of reformation. At Frankfort and Geneva they had gathered a great deal of information; there the genuine, uncompromising spirit of ecclesiasical and governmental reform had been caught, and upon the return to England the Calvinistic movement would develop a momentum hitherto unknown. The Puritans had great hopes concerning Queen Mary's successor, Elizabeth. The first impression was that she would favor the Protestants. But what a disappointment! ''She promised to do as her father had done.'' Indeed, and she did! We have described her father, Henry VIII, as a ''vacillating'' monarch. And Elizabeth was an adept in imitating his policy. The whole story of Elizabeth's reign can be understood, both in its more salient points and in its minor details, from this one fact, tersely expressed,—''She saw in Romanism a friend to monarchy; in Protestantism a friend to a growing tendency to popular rights in government.''†

*Eggleston, Beginners of a Nation, p. 107.

†Thompson, Religious Foundations, etc., p. 109.

Elizabeth knew nothing of liberty of conscience, of popular initiative in matters of state, of the essential equality of all men, of separation of church and state, of the derivative character of her official powers. She was a wilful stranger to all such ideas and principles. She defied her parliaments in many instances. "She understood her prerogative, which was as dear to her as her crown and life, but she understood nothing of the rights of conscience in matters of religion, and, like the absurd king, her father, she would have no opinion in religion acknowledged, at least, but her own."*

In many respects the Queen showed a wonderful ability to rule, but in many more respects she opposed Calvinism and all that Calvinism stood for as hard as she was able. The powers of the ruling head were almost unlimited at this time. The Venetian ambassador wrote to his government at about this time, "No one dares to withstand the royal will (no one, namely, of the members of parliament); they are slaves throughout."† And Hume, certainly no friend of the Puritans, wrote the following momentous words: "So absolute was the authority of the crown, that the precious spark of liberty *had been kindled,* and was preserved, by the Puritans alone; and it is to this sect that the English owe *the whole freedom* of their constitution." ‡

This statement of the wellknown English historian seems so sweeping, at first glance, that we must try to substantiate the same by adducing a number of historical facts,—facts the historicity of which has not been called in question by any competent writer, so far as we know.

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*Warner, Eccl. Hist. of England, vl. II, p. 474.

†For a more literal and expanded account of this writing see Prescott, Philip II, vl. I, ps. 77, 79.

‡Hume, Hist. of England, vl. V, p. 189.

The first part of Hume's statement, that the authority of the crown was absolute, needs no amplification. As to the latter and more important part—more important for our specific purpose—, it must be remembered, in the first place, that only part of the Puritans had made their way to the continent under bloody Mary, and that in the northeastern shires many yeomen and peasants continued quietly to believe in the teachings of Wyclif and Calvin. When the Puritan refugees returned from the continent and proclaimed the tenets of Calvinism, they were met by enthusiastic bands of fellow-Puritans, and together they endeavored to remedy conditions in the home country.

It must also not be forgotten that many Calvinistic churches of foreign origin were at this time found in England. For many generations Hollanders had found their way into England, Hollanders with Puritanic inclinations. At first they came from Flanders, afterwards the larger number came from the northern provinces. The churches they established adhered to Calvinism. Also many Frenchmen organized churches in England and these were of the same faith. In the course of time these churches began to influence English religious and political life, not in the first place because of their numbers, but chiefly because of the prominent men that were connected with them. The names of some of these men we have already mentioned in another connection.

Nor must we think light of the influence that the Scotch churches exerted upon English life at this time. The spirit of John Knox was too strong and impetuous to be limited by the political boundaries of the two kingdoms. The political interrelation between the two realms also favored a mutual exertion of spiritual and

religious influence, an influence that was to become still more evident a few decades hence.

At this time, also, the religious persecutions of Philip II of Spain took place in Holland, and thousands escaped the hands of the executioner by betaking themselves to England, there to continue their confession and propagation of the Calvinistic principles. "In the Netherlands," says Neal, "the Duke d'Alva breathed nothing but blood and slaughter . . . this occasioned great numbers to fly into England, which multiplied the Dutch churches in Norwich, Colchester, Sandwich, Canterbury, Maidstone, Southampton, London, Southwark, and elsewhere."*

The persecutions, moreover, that were inaugurated in France against the Huguenots sent many refugees across the Channel, and the sword of the Guises and Catharine de Medici helped the Protestant Calvinistic movement on the British Isles,—the very movement that the pursuers were seeking to crush.

Nor may the fruits be forgotten that English Calvinism harvested as a result of Elizabeth's actions in regard to Spain. To defend herself against Philip II the English queen deemed it necessary to send soldiers abroad, who were to aid the Dutch and French Protestants. But again the effect of this! "She could not maintain herself against Spain without helping the Dutch and the Huguenots; but every soldier she sent across the Channel came back, if he came at all, with his head full of the doctrines of Calvin; and these stalwart converts were re-inforced by the refugees from France and the Netherlands. . ."†

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*Neal, Puritans vol. I, p. 110.

†Fiske, Beginnings, p. 60.

Another reason for the rapid spread of the Calvinistic spirit in England may be found in the Presbyterian form of church organization. This form of ecclesiastical government was introduced into England by the men of Geneva, and particularly by Thomas Cartwright, professor at Geneva and Cambridge, successively. Professor Fisher tells us concerning Cartwright, "If Hooper was the father of Puritanism in its incipient form, a like relation to Puritanism, as a ripe and developed system, belongs to Thomas Cartwright."* From what we have said concerning Cartwright in another connection the reader may gather, to a certain extent, how strong his personality was and how bold and undaunted his courage. The Presbyterian church-form left all men free and equal before the face of God. Presbyterianism is ecclesiastical democracy,—not the democracy of the French revolution, but of the Word of God. No bishops there were in Presbyterian churches, no prelates of any kind. There were only the regularly ordained office-bearers, whose official powers were not inherent, but derivative in character; office-bearers that were chosen by the male members of the congregation, by *all* the male members, and not merely by freemen, property-owners, or men high up in station or in rank. The class-spirit was absolutely eliminated. It will be readily understood how this form of church government came to create a desire, a widespread desire, for a similar type of government in the state. Yet, it was not so much the idea of a superficial similarity that appealed to Calvinistic Englishmen. Without a more profound reason Puritanism could never have maintained itself against the absolutism of the Stuarts. The fundamental reason why the English Presbyterians kept everlastingly hammering on the sub-

*Fisher, Hist. of the Chr. Church, p. 377.

ject of popular rights, also in the sphere of the state, was that the same divine principles of Holy Writ, which caused them to institute the Presbyterian form of government in the *church,* had been designated by the Bible as applying also to the realm of the *state.* Church and state, both were subject to the sovereignty of God. For these principles we again refer the reader to our Introduction.

Furthermore, the official standard of the English Church, the Thirty-nine Articles, was Calvinistic in letter and in spirit, with the only exception of the parts dealing with the outward or institutional form of the church. In those parts not the influence of Calvin and Bullinger, but of Erastus and the church of Rome was in evidence. And the Lambeth Articles, published at the end of the sixteenth century, and serving unofficially as a supplement to the Thirty-nine Articles, were so strictly in accordance with the spirit of Geneva that the great Reformer himself would have scarcely found a jot or a tittle to erase; indeed, they even went stronger on certain points than Calvin had gone. We need not repeat what we have said concerning Calvinistic literature in England at this time, and its colossal growth. We only make mention, at this point, of the Catechism that was found in no less than thirty-five editions of the English Bible between the years 1574 and 1615,—a Catechism that was Calvinistic in every respect.* Is it still necessary to write of the tremendous influence that was exerted in all parts of the kingdom by the spread of these religious documents?

Time and again the Puritans, buoyed, strengthened, and encouraged by the various means that we have enumerated, petitioned Parliament for the purpose of gain-

*Campbell, Puritans, vol. II, p. 143.

ing the ends that they were striving for. They prevented Elizabeth many times from doing rash things in the way of political or ecclesiastical reformation, although she ruled with much arbitrariness and violated the rights of her subjects on many occasions. They gradually won Parliament to their side.

Besides the Puritans there was no other party in the whole of England that stood for religious and political freedom. Whatever progress was made at this time in the direction of popular liberty was the result of Puritanic action.

Does Hume's forceful statement concerning the significance of Puritanism in Elizabethan times need a further vindication?

Significantly Sir Francis Walsingham, secretary of state in Elizabeth's time, wrote in a letter to Monsieur Cretoy of the French Court, "They (the non-conforming Puritans) opened to the people a way to government . . .". Writing of the times at the end of Elizabeth's reign, Bancroft makes the assertion that "their followers (those of the Puritan clergy) already constituted a powerful political party; inquired into the nature of government in parliament, opposed monopolies, limited the royal prerogatives, and demanded a reform of ecclesiastical abuses . . . Popular liberty, which used to animate its friends by appeals to the examples of ancient republics, now listened to a voice from the grave of Wickliffe, from the ashes of Huss, from the vigils of Calvin."* With true Calvinistic firmness and resoluteness, but also with true Calvinistic patience and fortitude, the Puritans progagated their principles. Gathering strength and inspiration from the Jerusalem of the Alps, they endeavored to realize the ideals of the Jerusalem which is above.

*Bancroft, Hist. of U. S., vol. I, p. 291.

Says Neal, after an exhaustive study of the Puritans and the Puritanic principles, "As yet I must be of opinion that they(the Puritans) were the best friends of the Constitution and liberties of their country; that they were neither unquiet nor restless, unless against tyranny in the state and oppression upon the conscience; that they made use of no other weapons, during a course of fourscore years, but prayers to God and petitions to the Legislature for redress of their grievances, it being an article in their belief that absolute submission was due to the supreme magistrate in all things lawful, as will sufficiently appear by their protestations in the beginning of the reign of King James I."*

How shallow, in distinction from such views, are the remarks of men like Mr. Eggleston concerning the behavior of the Puritans! Says Mr. Eggleston, "Because Parliament was on its side, the mere course of events had made the Puritan Party favor the predominance of Parliament, and this brought it to represent liberalism in politics." † We cite this passage because it exemplifies the attitude and conception of many modern authors, men that evidently do not understand Calvinism or Puritanism, consequently do not understand its motives and actions, and so give an incorrect account of many facts and events that go to make up English and American history.

Presently we shall have occasion to cite another example of historical misrepresentation, furnished by one of the most celebrated authors of modern times.

In 1603 Elizabeth passed from the scene of life. James VI of Scotland came to the throne as James the First of England, and the Puritans were again hopeful

*Neal, Hist. of Puritans, Preface to Vol. II of the Original Edition.

†Eggleston, Beginners of a Nation, p. 191.

as to the future. James was a Presbyterian and had lived in the atmosphere of the Scottish Kirk. Surely, he would understand their attitude and would comply, at least in a measure, with their wishes. But how sorely they were disappointed! It will be necessary, in order to understand the future migrations to the American continent, which it is our purpose to discuss in the chapters immediately following, to examine the king's attitude towards the Puritans and in general to trace the development of the Calvinistic movement in England under the reign of the Scottish ruler.

For many years James had been in enmity with the Presbyterians in Scotland. Andrew Melville, the virtual successor of John Knox, was his constant opponent. James was by nature "a pedant; he lacked common sense, could never take a comprehensive view of a great question, and was inflated with self-conceit." In his "Basilicon Doron" he professed the right of kings to do as they pleased. He believed himself to have been privileged by the Most High to "boss" his subjects around in whichever way he saw fit. It will be evident at once that such a king could have nothing to do with Calvinistic Presbyterianism. Presbyterianism, to the mind of James, was one of the most dangerous phenomena in his realm. And when he was called to the English throne his attitude in this respect did not change in the least. The Millenary Petition, signed by about 800 clergymen, residing in 25 counties, which complained of non-residence, pluralities, cap and surplice, and things of a similar nature, did not influence him. It led, among other things, to the convocation at Hampton Court. Four leading Puritan divines were to meet with nine bishops and other representatives of the Episcopal system to discuss the various grievances which the Puritans entertain-

ed. King James, who had some very strong notions in favor of Episcopacy and was entirely predisposed to settle the affair as was best to the bishops' liking, took occasion to hurl at the Puritan representatives that brief and well known philippic, "You are aiming at a Scotch presbytery, which agrees with monarchy as well as God and the devil." And he added, "I will have one doctrine, one discipline, one religion, in substance and ceremony. . . .If this be all your (Puritan) party have to say, I will make them conform or I will harry them out of this land, or else worse." The Episcopalians were elated at the remarkable attitude of this so-called Calvinistic king. New bishops were appointed in several instances and " the court and the new bishops bore hard upon the Puritans, filling the pulpits with men of arbitrary principles and punishing those who dared to preach for the rights of the subject." What happened in 1622 was only a natural sequel to a great number of royal acts that had taken place in previous years. In that year, 1622, the king wrote to Archbishop Abbot the following direction,—"That no preacher, of any degree soever, shall henceforth presume in any auditory to declare, limit, or set bounds to the prerogative, power or jurisdiction of sovereign princes, or meddle with matters of state." "From this time," says Neal, "all Calvinists were in a manner excluded from court preferments. The way to rise in the church was to preach up the absolute power of the king, to disclaim against the rigours of Calvinism, and to speak favorably of popery. Those who scrupled this were neglected and distinguished by the name of Doctrinal Puritans (it will be seen anon how this name was applied to the Puritans also in another sense)—but it was the glory of this people that they stood together, like a wall, against the

arbitrary proceedings of the king, both in church and state.''*

Two movements must be made mention of at this juncture,—movements that were to influence Puritanism to a great extent. The first is that of the Independents, the second that of the Arminians. Independentism or Congregationalism finds its beginnings at the time of Queen Mary. Heylin, in his History of the Reformation, when speaking of the troubles at Frankfort, says, ''A new discipline was devised by Ashley, a gentleman of good note among the laity there, and his party, whereby the superintendency of pastors and elders was laid aside, and the supreme power in all ecclesiastical causes put into the hands of congregations.''† The idea of Independentism is fairly well expressed in this quotation. Both Presbyterians and Independents believe in Christ as the ruling Head of his church. They differ as to the method by which Christ carries out his rule. The Presbyterians say, Christ rules thru the instrumentality of office-bearers. These office-bearers have no power inherent in themselves, but their powers have been delegated unto them by Christ, and in all things they are strictly accountable to their Master. The Independents claim that Christ delegated this power to rule to the congregation as such, and do not believe that office-bearers should interfere. In other words, the Presbyterians believe in a representative, the Independents in a pure democracy. Moreover, the Presbyterians hold that the unity of the church of Christ demands the existence of larger advisory bodies, consisting of representatives from different congregations. The Independents claim that Scripture does not require this, but that in certain cases it may be wise and profitable to hold joint meet-

*Neal, Puritans, vl. I, p. 272.
†Schaff's Rel. Enc., Art. Congregationalism.

ings of different congregations. The Presbyterians believe in a spiritual unity of the different congregations, but also in a formal or institutional unity. The Independents do not believe in the latter.

Robert Browne, Henry Barrowe, John Greenwood, Francis Johnson, and Henry Ainsworth are counted among the fathers of Independentism. While the Presbyterians believed in a free church in a free state, but did not break abruptly with the Established Church, the Independents became Separatists at once. The Independents were hotly pursued by the royal government. They were treated with much intolerance by the Presbyterians and other Puritans. In after years a process of amelioration was started and Presbyterians and Independents began to associate with each other. The American colonies were to offer a fine example of this newly acquired habit of mutual toleration.

We find, therefore, during the reign of King James, the English Protestants divided in four groups. It is well, for the proper understanding of what is to follow, that we have these fixed in mind. We have, first of all, the loyal members of the Anglican or Established Church, those that refused to criticize this political creation of Henry VIII, that adhered to the Book of Public Worship, and that staunchly defended both church and form of worship in the midst of hotly fought battles. These were known as the Conformists, or Conforming Puritans. (We give these two designations, because among the Conformists some had Puritan ideals, without at any time, however, taking aggressive steps to bring about their realization). Secondly, there were those that disagreed with many customs and practices in the Established Church, and that put forth many and various efforts to bring about a change. These were the Non-conforming Puritans. Next, the Presbyterians

must be mentioned, the class of people that had been strongly influenced by Cartwright's Genevan idea of church government, that believed in the separation of church and state, that held forth the necessity of larger church assemblies, meeting at regular intervals, and that stood for a representative democracy in the church in general, always maintaining that "representative democracy" did not mean popular rule, rule by the "demos," but a rule by Christ thru the instrumentality of the popular representatives. Christ reigned as King thru his office-bearers, and these office-bearers were elected by the people. In the fourth place the Independents must be named, of whom we have just written, briefly describing the time of their genesis and the main features which distinguished them from the Presbyterians.

The second movement that we were to make mention of was that of the Arminians, or Remonstrants, as they were known in the Netherlands. Jacobus Arminius, a Dutchman, was the father of this doctrinal movement, and he soon found many followers, not only in the country of his birth, but also across the Channel, in the domains of James I. It would be out of place here to enter into a discussion of the various points in which Arminius differed from the Calvinists. Suffice it to say that his doctrines struck at the very soul of the Calvinistic system, and that the propagation of these doctrines necessitated a strong offensive and defensive warfare on the part of the Calvinists. In England the active opponents of Arminianism were known as Doctrinal Puritans. They were sustained in their actions by the great international Synod of Dordrecht, in the Netherlands, whither also James I had sent a delegation of theologians. The Synod of Dordrecht declared in favor of a thorough-going Calvinism, and embodied its ideas in the Five Articles against the Remonstrants. That these doc-

trinal battles spurred the English Calvinists on to a greater activity, need hardly be stated. They became more cognizant of their great principles. The flame of religious enthusiasm was fanned in their breasts. Heroism shone forth in renewed splendor. They came to be characterized by a dogged determination. James I fired his pistols at a veritable wall of rock, and the bullets glanced off with a hollow boom. God was in their souls. There was something of the Almighty in their behavior. A king unregenerated was but dust and ashes in comparison with the favorites, the royal favorites, of the Most High. Truly, the Calvinists respected their earthly sovereign, and profoundly so, but thrice and four times woe unto him if he dared to cross the boundary mark, set by the Omnipotent's own laws and edicts!

We here take occasion to present to our readers a quotation from a very prominent author,—a quotation that shows how hopelessly confused some of our modern historians have become as soon as they set themselves to explain religious, social, and political questions that bear a vital relation to points of doctrine or theological concepts. In connection with the strife between Calvinists and Arminians our author undertakes to say, "Now, it is an interesting fact that the doctrines which in England are called Calvinistic have been always connected with a democratic spirit. . . . In the republics of Switzerland, of North America, and of Holland, Calvinism was always the popular creed. . . . The first circumstance by which we must be struck is that Calvinism is a doctrine for the poor and Arminianism for the rich. A creed which insists upon the necessity of faith *must be less costly* than one which insists upon the necessity of work (hereby meaning pecuniary contributions, as is evident from following pages). . . . Out of these circumstances inevitably arose the aristocratic

tendency of Arminianism and the democratic tendency of Calvinism. The people love pomp and pageantry as much as the nobles do, but they do not love to pay for them. . . .By a parity of reasoning, the more any society tends to equality the more likely it is that its theological opinions will be Calvinistic; while the more a society tends towards inequality, the greater the probability of these opinions being Arminian.''*

Alas and alack! And this grand concoction, gentle reader, originated in the mind of no one less than the distinguished gentleman, Henry Thomas Buckle, author of History of Civilization in England. Was the gentleman in earnest? It would seem so. Oh, for but one lone Puritan, risen from his resting-place to view this scandalous production of the nineteenth century! Would not his eyes, mirrors of the soul, flash and flare? Would not he clench his fists and would not his facial features twitch and twinge? And then, would he not relax and break into a pitying smile, and remain speechless withal?

And Buckle is not the only sinner!

Refreshing, on the other hand, are the views of such men as Fiske, when it comes to estimating the real worth of Calvinism in the England of King James. Says this brilliant author, after a survey of seventeenth century conditions, ''. . . In view of these facts we may see how tremendous was the question at stake with the Puritans of the seventeenth century. Everywhere else the Roman idea (despotism) seemed to have conquered or be conquering, while they seemed to be left as the forlorn hope of the human race.'' And in another connection this same author writes, ''I endeavored to set forth and illustrate some of the chief causes which have shifted the world's political centre of gravity from the

*Buckle, Hist. of Civ. in England, vl. II, p. 339.

Mediterranean and the Rhine to the Atlantic and the Mississippi . . . In the course of the exposition we began to catch glimpses of the wonderful significance of the fact that. . .when the supreme day of trial came, the dominant religious sentiment (Calvinism) was arrayed on the side of political freedom and against political despotism.''*

We must here repeat what we stated in the opening paragraph of this chapter, that Calvinism was never given a chance in England to show its full strength. Even under the great Protector its ideals were never fully realized. Under James I and his immediate successor, the first Charles, the Puritans oftentimes struggled in vain. They controlled the House of Commons, but the Commons could do but little over against the king, the House of Lords, and the High Church party. Besides, the lower classes in English society, the populace, among whom Puritanism had gained the large majority of its adherents, were in no position whatsoever to exert influence upon the nation's rulers. The House of Commons represented, not the *people* as such, but the middle class. Had the situation been of a different kind, the House of Commons, which did very little more in the given circumstances but protest and balk and hold back, might have developed sufficient strength to become the deciding factor in governmental actions. As it was, the Stuarts remained bold and defiant. Aristocracy was at the throttle. The revolutionary movements that one finds recorded in the history of English national politics were aggressive movements on the part of the middle class,—never on the part of what we Americans term ''the people.'' And so despotism was curbed, it is true, but never fully eradicated on British soil.

*Fiske, Beginnings, ps. 47, 50.

Yet—the statements of Mr. Fiske can stand. It can even be added that when a limited democracy was struggling against the pretentious acts of the king and his associates, it was in many instances Calvinism that saved the day. The Calvinistic principles, inculcated in the hearts and minds of hundreds of thousands of Britishers, proved to be a mighty barricade against the ambitious designs of the sovereign. It was these same principles, and the influence which they exerted upon the middle class, which finally, in 1649, caused the downfall of the Stuart regime. There was no other force in the whole of England, besides that of Puritanism, which contended for true liberty and democracy. It is an incorrect representation of affairs to claim that the Puritans, or Calvinists, bore the "brunt" of the battle, —they bore its entire weight, they fought single-handed; all the onslaughts of a politico-ecclesiastical autocracy, brutal and venomous at once, were headed for them alone; without them the Stuart dynasty, and perhaps even that of the Tudors, would have terrorized England into a servile submission, the effects of which would have been in evidence until the present day, not only in the old, but also in the new world.

This is no vain and empty eulogy of Calvinism; it is merely an account of facts that have been verified and historically substantiated, and which no unbiased and well-informed historian has ever denied.

It will be our business in the following chapters to show the wonderful way in which this religious action in the old mother country affected the life and thought of our own America.

THE MEN OF THE MAYFLOWER

CHAPTER III.

THE MEN OF THE MAYFLOWER

IT has been often claimed by competent historians that King James and his political and ecclesiastical satellites were Puritans in doctrines and agreed in the main with the tenets of John Calvin. We cannot deny the statement. James has written many books on theology. They are a clear evidence of the Calvinistic education which the author had received from the Scottish Kirk. But James, the would-be theologian, was a splendid proof of the distinctness of theory and practice, of the fact that the former can exist without the latter, —that the two can even be in flagrant contradiction with each other. James was a Puritan—but only nominally so. He hated real, thoroughgoing Calvinism as strongly and bitterly as any of his predecessors. We refuse to be blindfolded by this man's theological pedantry—only facts count. And facts show undeniably that from the very moment that he donned the royal purple until the moment of his departure he opposed Calvinism in whichever way he was able, and all this for reasons of selfishness and self-aggrandizement.

In 1604, a few weeks after the Convocation at Hampton Court, Archbishop Whitgift, the king's right hand, died, and Bancroft was chosen by the king as his successor. Whitgift had always assumed an inimical attitude towards the real Puritans, but Bancroft surpassed him in this respect. A set of 141 rules was adopted, which required of every subject of the British crown an absolute adherence to the edicts of the High Church party. Severe penalties were connected with this order. In the very year of the promulgation of this order

no less than 300 Puritan ministers were silenced, imprisoned, or exiled. The House of Commons did not agree with this procedure, but the king had blatantly asserted that he was going to make them all conform. And so the machine was set to work.

For a period of six years the king and his archbishop continued their tyrannical procedure. In 1610 Bancroft was stopped short, however, by the angel of death, and he was succeeded by Bishop Abbot.

We make mention of these facts so that the first migration of English Calvinists to the American continent may be rightly understood in all its bearings. This first migration was undertaken by the stalwart men, generally known as the Pilgrimfathers.

The Pilgrims have usually been classed with the Independents, and rightly so. Yet we shall see later on that they were not wholly averse to Presbyterian principles of church government, and that they got along very well with the Presbyterian brethren. In fact, the Pilgrims and the Presbyterians, that afterwards lived in the Massachusetts Bay district, were essentially one; there was a perfect unity, both in doctrine and as regards the motives that were back of the different migratory movements.

During the latter part of Elizabeth's reign, in 1593, a law had been enacted by which all Independents, or Separatists, were banished from the country. The majority of them fled to the Netherlands. And here not only freedom of religion existed, but freedom of speech as well. All manner of ideas and doctrines were propagated in Holland by means of the printing press, and also the Independents, upon their arrival in this country, made ample use of the wonderful invention. England was "flooded" with "Separatistic" literature. The Dutch government refused to interfere. And so, when

Bancroft became "Aidé de camp" to James I, this gentleman in his exuberant zeal to root out all non-conformancy saw no other alternative but to reverse the decision of 1593, and he consequently put a complete restriction upon the Separatist-emigration to the Netherlands.

While Elizabeth was persecuting the Separatists, one of their congregations, that of Gainsborough, in Nottinghamshire, was able to hold its own, and it was in existence until 1606, when the fiery zeal of Bancroft found out its hiding place. The congregation was split up in two divisions, the one, under the leadership of Rev. John Smyth, escaping to Amsterdam, the Netherlands, and the other establishing itself in the hamlet of Scrooby, choosing the Rev. Richard Clyfton as their leader and the Rev. John Robinson as his assistant. The postmaster of Scrooby was one William Brewster, who was to become one of the leaders in the migration to America. William Bradford, who was in later years to become the governor of New Plymouth, also belonged to the Scrooby group. Clyfton, Robinson, and Brewster were all Cambridge university men. They form as noble and heroic a trio as can be found in the history of any nation. They were staunch Calvinists. They subscribed to all the fundamental ideas that the Reformer of Geneva had propounded. It is true, in the matter of church organization they deviated from the Genevan path, but this influenced their faith and doctrines to such an inconsiderable extent, that the American Bancroft is right when he simply calls the Pilgrimfathers, "men of the same faith with Calvin."

Clyfton had been the chief instrument in leading the Pilgrimfathers up to the high ideals which they came to entertain. Governor Bradford writes of him in his First Dialogue, "Much good had he done in the country where

he lived and converted many to God by his faithful and painful ministry, both in preaching and catechizing.'' And Arber tells us, ''In fact, both intellectually and spiritually he woke up the neighborhood.''* He refused to be a stipendiary of the government, and so brought into practice the doctrine of the separation of church and state. While in Scrooby Clyfton was loyally supported by Elder Brewster; in fact, Brewster supported the entire congregation to a large extent, both in a moral and a material aspect.

But the pursuer was pursuing them hotly, and Bancroft's aides soon caused serious disturbances in the church at Scrooby. Some of the members were maltreated, others were locked up in their houses, or cast into jails. Something had to be done. It was finally decided that the Scrooby church, too, would move to Amsterdam, there to enjoy that liberty of conscience and religion which they would fain have experienced in the home country, but which James I and his followers were striving to crush wherever and whenever they could. Almost indescribable were the troubles that these poor refugees met with upon their attempt to leave the country. As has been stated, Bancroft had decided to reverse the order of Elizabeth and no one was allowed to escape to the continent. In August, 1608, however, about the whole congregation, consisting of some one hundred men and women, found itself in the city on the Amstel. Its stay in the Dutch metropolis was of short duration. Other Independents had preceded the Scrooby people and had established themselves in Amsterdam. Here they became embroiled in doctrinal troubles of various kind. Whether the Scrooby congregation saw these troubles coming or already found itself in the midst

*Arber, Pilgrimfathers, p. 52.

of them, or whether its members feared the evil effects of Amsterdam city life, it is hard to make out, but history tells us that on the twelfth of February, 1609, the city council of Leyden answered favorably a request from the Scrooby people, to be allowed to remove from Amsterdam to the university town in the broad meadows of South Holland.

Not much is known of the life and doings of the Pilgrims in the city of Leyden. The little we know has been given to us by Governor Bradford in his History of the Plymouth Plantation. But this lack of information matters very little for our purpose. Suffice it to say that these hardy men retained their religious vigor all through their stay in Holland, and that the influence of Dutch ecclesiastical and political life was beneficial in the extreme, from a Calvinistic point of view. In 1620 one third of the congregation left the city and country that had harbored them for a time, and set sail for the distant shores of America. The chief reasons which Governor Bradford gives for this migration to America are, first, that these men intended to remain Englishmen and wished to forecome a gradual absorption in the Dutch nation; secondly, that these men being countrymen by birth and occupation, disliked the factory work of the Dutch city; thirdly, and chiefly, that their souls longed for a new country, where they could serve their God in all walks of life wholly in accordance with the dictates of their conscience.

Rather than dwell on historic points of minor importance (points that are, moreover, well known to the average American), let us examine the controlling ideas of the Pilgrim-mind and the attitude of these noble people towards life in general. In other words, let us see whether this specific group of people answered the requirements of genuine Calvinists. Says De Tocque-

ville, "Methinks I see the destiny of America embodied in the first Puritan (applying this name also to the Pilgrims) who landed on those shores, just as the human race was represented by the first man."* If that is the case, surely, a look into the soul of these people ought to be worth while.

When the Pilgrims left Amsterdam for Leyden, the Rev. Clyfton, their chief leader, decided to stay where he was, and so the Rev. John Robinson, Clyfton's chief assistant hitherto, took upon himself the leadership of the congregation, or rather, to be more exact, he was elected leader by the male members of the congregation. Robinson became the "teaching" elder and Brewster was the "ruling" elder. Robinson's influence upon his flock was so complete, that an examination of his personal ideas, tendencies, and actions, virtually amounts to an examination of the whole Pilgrim band.

Robinson, then, in his Apology tells us that the chief reasons for the Pilgrims' separating from the Church of England were, first, the unbiblical form of liturgy in the Anglican Church; secondly, the "nationality" of the constitution of the Church (meaning that the Church was a creation of the national government and was controlled by the same); thirdly, the corrupt communion of believers and unbelievers at the Lord's table. Upon these and other grounds Robinson defended their act of separation and argues that more radical steps should be taken in regard to the anti-biblical conditions in the Anglican Church than was done by the non-conforming Puritans, or even by the Presbyterians.

Robinson entertained a deep-seated grudge against everything Arminian and fought this type of religion whenever opportunity was afforded him. We have the

*De Tocqueville, Democracy, p. 318.

indisputable testimony of Edward Winslow, that Robinson, at the time when Arminianism was fast gaining ground in Holland, was asked by Polyander, Festus Hommius, and other Dutch theologians, to take part in the disputes with Episcopius, the new leader of the Arminians, which were daily held in the academy at Leyden. Robinson complied with their request and was soon looked upon as one of the greatest of Gomarian theologians. In 1624 the Pilgrim pastor wrote a masterful treatise, entitled, "A Defence of the Doctrine Propounded by the Synod of Dort, etc." As the Synod of Dordrecht, of international fame, was characterized by a strict Calvinism in all its decisions, no more need be said of Robinson's religious tendencies.

The Pilgrims were perfectly at one with the Reformed (Calvinistic) churches in the Netherlands and elsewhere. In his Apology, published in 1619, one year before the Pilgrims left Holland, Robinson wrote, in a most solemn way, "We do profess before God and men that such is our accord, in the case of religion, with the Dutch Reformed Churches, as that we are ready to subscribe to all and every article of faith in the same Church, as they are laid down in the Harmony of Confessions of Faith, published in their name." This surely does not betoken a holier-than-thou attitude. It does not betray any sickly mysticism on the part of the Scrooby people, as though they had separated from the Church of England and were now again leaving the country of their adoption because they regarded themselves farther advanced on the path of sanctification than the rest of mankind. We do not know how it is, but our impression is that we Americans have regarded these Pilgrims too much as some sort of supernatural beings; we have painted them in too romanesque colors; we have cast a halo of glory around them, and it requires

strenuous efforts to get to seeing them in their true and natural light. As a matter of fact, they were ordinary, strong, robust, red-blooded men; they were Calvinists of the same type as the Non-conformists in England, the Reformed in the Netherlands and France, the Covenanters in Scotland. In fact, they stood closer to the English Presbyterians than to the Non-conformists. The only thing that distinguished the Pilgrims from all the rest was the form of church organization (and, of course, their being more radical)—and this matter proved to be of such small moment to them, that they never even entertained a thought of refusing communion with the other churches on that account. One of the foremost Pilgrims, Edward Winslow, could truthfully write, "That church (of the Pilgrims at Leyden) made no schism or separation from the Reformed churches, but held communion with them occasionally. . . . For the truth is, the Dutch and French churches, either of them being a people distinct from the world and gathered into a holy communion, and not national churches, . . . the difference is so small (if moderately pondered) between them and us, as we *dare not for the world* deny communion with them."* And in another connection Winslow writes, "For his (Robinson's) doctrine, I living three years under his ministry, before we began the work of plantation in New England, it was always against separation from any of the churches of Christ; professing and holding communion both with the French and Dutch churches, yea, tendering it to the Scotch also, as I shall make appear more particularly anon; ever holding forth how wary persons ought to be in separaing from a Church, and that till Christ the Lord departed wholly from it, man ought not to leave it, only

*Bacon, Genesis of N. E. Churches, ps. 301, 302.

to bear witness against the corruption that was in it.''*

When the small band of men, women, and children, stood ready to leave Holland, their leader spoke a touching farewell address. Because of various circumstances part of the congregation remained in Leyden, and this remaining part, together with the pastor, were to undertake the voyage at some future time. Robinson, however, has never seen the bleak coasts of New England. The noble and hard-working pastor of this little band was called home in the year 1625.

In his farewell address Robinson enunciated one of the most fundamental maxims of the Calvinistic Reformation, —that the process of dogmatic evolution could not be brought to a dead stop by the say-so of some theologian, no matter how splendid the qualifications were that the man possessed. No theologian could speak with absolute finality. This maxim Robinson worded most beautifully. He called the Calvinists of early Reformation times, ''precious shining lights,'' but added that God had not revealed his whole will to them. ''For it is not possible the Christian world should come so lately out of such thick anti-christian darkness, and that full perfection of knowledge should break forth at once.''

Authors with modern, liberal tendencies, that praise Robinson because of the ''exceptional'' stand he takes here, are reminded of the fact that no true Calvinist has ever denied the truth of Robinson's statement; has ever claimed anything to the contrary. Calvin himself did not. And in our own day such a man as Dr. A. Kuyper has expressed himself on this point in phraseology almost synonymous with that of Robinson.† Usually such modern authors depict Calvinism as a type of dead

*Winslow, Briefe Narration, etc., in Young's Chronicles, p. 388.

†Kuyper, Theological Encyclopædia, Art. Dogmatics.

conservatism in the realm of religion, and when they meet with utterances like that of Robinson they have to find a way out.

Besides addressing them and admonishing them to walk in the ways of truth and righteousness, the faithful pastor gave them a sort of pastoral epistle along,—a document worthy of the most careful consideration, because it so clearly characterizes its author as a true and loyal son of Geneva. The document reads in part, "Whereas you are to become a body politic, using amongst yourselves civil government, and are not furnished with any persons of special eminency above the rest to be chosen by you into office of government, let your wisdom and godliness appear not only in choosing such persons as do entirely love and will diligently promote the common good, but also in yielding unto them all due honor and obedience in their lawful administrations, not beholding in them the ordinariness of their persons, but God's ordinance for your good; nor being like the foolish multitude, who more honor the gay coat than either the virtuous mind of the man, or glorious ordinance of the Lord. But you know better things, and that the image of the Lord's power and authority, which the magistrate beareth, is honorable, in how mean persons soever."*

In this short excerpt no less than five important principles are enunciated:

1. That other forms of government are permissible besides that of an hereditary kingship, as it existed in the mother country.

2. That the ideal form of government is that of a *democracy.* Robinson does not desire a pure democracy, in the Grecian sense of that term; he advises the es-

*Young, Chronicles, p. 95.

tablishment of a representative type of government.

3. That equal manhood suffrage should obtain in the colony, and that, consequently, henceforth distinctions of rank or class should not be allowed to enter the political arena.

4. That the sovereignty of rulers is derivative in character, and that it is by the grace of God that governmental authority may be exercised.

5. That a perfect obedience should be shown to the governmental powers, insofar these powers act "lawfully" while performing their various duties.

That the men of the Mayflower made use of this epistle and employed the same as a guide in the wording and general shaping of their famous Mayflower Compact becomes evident as soon as one begins to compare the two documents. This Compact was written in the cabin of the ship that carried the Pilgrims across, and its composition marks "the birth of popular constitutional liberty."—"The Middle Age had been familiar with charters and constitutions; but they had been merely compacts for immunities, partial enfranchisements, patents of nobility, concessions of municipal privileges, or limitations of the sovereign power in favor of feudal institutions. In the cabin of the Mayflower humanity recovered its rights. . ."*

The Compact follows:

"In the name of God, Amen. We, whose names are underwritten, the loyal subjects of our dread sovereign King James, having undertaken, for the glory of God, and advancement of the Christian faith, and honour of our King and country, a voyage to plant the first colony in the northern parts of Virginia, do, by these presents, solemnly and mutually, in the presence of God, and one of another, covenant and combine ourselves to-

*Bancroft, Hist. of U. S., vl. I, p. 310.

gether, into a civil body politic, for our better ordering and preservation, and furtherance of the ends aforesaid; and by virtue hereof, to enact, constitute, and frame, such just and equal laws, ordinances, acts, constitutions, and offices, from time to time, as shall be thought most convenient for the general good of the colony. Unto which we promise all due submission and obedience.''

In this Compact the whole soul of the Pilgrims is reflected. Let us try to analyze the document, making annotations upon the various thought-elements of which it consists.

1. The Pilgrims call themselves ''loyal subjects'' of their king. There was nothing revolutionary in their act of colonizing; in fact, they had the permission of King James himself. As true men of God they adhered to the powers that were ordained by God.

2. The fact that they describe the king as their ''dread sovereign'' indicates their belief that the king's sovereignty had been derived from the sovereignty of God (from the Fas, the Jus Divinum), and that for that reason loyalty and respect should be shown unto him. Never, not for their lives, would these Calvinists have called a man, whose powers were derived from popular consent, or a mere popular vote,—never would they have called such an one their ''dread sovereign.''

3. The men of the Mayflower recognize ''King James'' as their dread sovereign. It was this king that had persecuted them, that had caused their flight from the mother-country. Yet they recognized him as their sovereign. They could not do otherwise. To their Calvinistic mind any other action would have been revolution against God himself. True, Robinson had continually told them, and had repeated the same in his epistle (see above), that in things ''unlawful'' they should *not* obey the government. It was exactly due to this

that they fled the country. They refused to listen to the "unlawful" commands of the king. But these single, "unlawful" acts of the king did not invalidate the royal prerogatives! Not at all. David still recognized Saul as the anointed of the Lord, notwithstanding the fact that Saul pursued him continually,—"as when one doth hunt a partridge in the mountains." The rights of royalty must be maintained even in the face of serious delinquency, and only then may a nation repudiate a ruler's claim to these rights, when the ruler by a continued series of tyrannical acts is manifestly and unmistakably bringing about the enslavement or ruin of the people in general,—a condition exactly antithetical to that desired by the Author of royal rights and privileges. The Pilgrims, in recognizing James I as their king, and at the same time, in refusing to be stepped on in matters of conscience, revealed themselves as Calvinists of the genuine stamp.

4. These men, moreover, had undertaken the voyage "for the glory of God." Who, in reading these words, does not think of the Soli Deo Gloria of the genius of Geneva? Calvinism alone, among all the other types of Protestant religion, has stressed with inflexible rigor that all things exist for the glory of the Creator, that the plans of creation and of restoration, in their terrible majesty, their vastness, their unfathomable depths and unscalable heights, have but one all-controlling aim,—the glorification of the Master-thinker. Calvinism holds that every act or undertaking on the part of puny man should be consciously directed to the same end. The Pilgrims knew this, believed this, expressed this—in their Compact,—at the very head of their series of colonization aims.

5. Another one of their aims was "the advancement of the Christian faith." This aim was sub-

sidiary to the one just described. One of the foremost means in endeavoring to reach the ultimate and supreme aim, the glorification of God, was the advancement of the Christian faith. It is beyond doubt that the colonists had mission work in view, the work of the propagation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The author was surprised, in his survey of the old colonial literature and official documents, to find so many instances of missionary zeal and missionary endeavor. In the discussion of the Puritan migration we shall have better opportunity to dwell upon this point. Suffice it to say that also the Pilgrims were filled with a burning desire, to bring that which they themselves treasured so very highly to the aborigines of their new country.

6. It was also stated that the voyage was undertaken "for the honor of our King and country." In true loyalty to the government and country which God's providence had connected them with, they sought the honor of both, that is, they aimed at the expansion of the British realm, thus enhancing its influence and general prestige among the nations of the earth. The patriotism of these men, driven from their home country in a most merciless way, is astounding. It shows, among other things, how they based their entire life and conduct upon a system of principles, of heaven-born principles, and did not allow themselves to be swayed by temporary events or emotions run amuck, however disagreeable the situation.

7. These men were to found "the first colony" in the northern parts of Virginia. It is not to our purpose to discuss the reason why, after all, they settled in New England, and not in more southerly regions. But we do wish to call attention to the fact that the voyagers in that frail, little ship were fully conscious of it, that they were to found the *first* colony. Their work,

therefore, was to be fundamental in character. They were to sow the seeds, and—as the seeds were, so the plants would be. Hence the utmost care in the framing of this Compact. Hence the significance of every word found in the same. Hence the spirit of the whole piece —a spirit, not of bravado, of giddiness and shallow buoyancy, but of sober contemplation and deep solemnity.

8. This leads us to the central point in the document,—"We . . . covenant and combine ourselves together, into a civil body politic." In discussing this point it may be stated at the outset that what the Pilgrims (and, for that matter, also the later Puritans) aimed at was not a theocracy, in the commonly accepted sense of that term. We know, in making that statement we place ourself at variance with nearly all writers on the subject. The general conception of this point is pretty well represented by the statement of Dr. Thompson, that it was the purpose of Calvin "to establish the direct rule of God upon earth—a theocracy in the true sense," and that William the Silent, Admiral de Coligny, Latimer, Knox, Marnix de St. Aldegonde, and Agrippa d' Aubigne, aimed at the same thing.* We make bold to brand such and similar statements as incorrect and as being in flat contradiction with the writings of the men mentioned and with the historical accounts connected with their various doings. Calvin did *not* wish to establish a theocracy. Neither did any of the men that were of the same mind as the great Genevan.

For what is a theocracy? Is a country whose lawmakers and administrative officials let themselves be guided by the Word of God, whose government confesses to rule "by the grace of God" and humbly acknowledges

*R. E. Thompson, A Hist. of Presb. Church in the U. S., p. 10.

that it would have no authority whatsoever if it had not been granted by the Most High, the Sovereign of sovereigns, the Potentate of potentates, the King of kings and Lord of lords,—is such a country governed in *theocratic* fashion? Absolutely not! A theocracy (and this word does not lend itself to a "broader" or "more general" conception)—a theocracy is found only in such a country, where God himself, without the mediation of man, establishes the national laws, not only so far as their general principles are concerned, but in detail, concretely, and so as to be applicable to the various conditions and relations that are in existence.* It will be realized at once that such a country there has been but one—that of Israel. A theocracy can only exist in a time and in a sphere of special divine revelation. No Calvinist has ever dreamed of pleading or fighting for a theocracy in post-apostolic times. And only extreme carelessness in thinking and writing or a pitiful lack of discriminatory ability can lead to expressions of the kind cited above. All that the Pilgrims wanted was a Biblical, a Calvinistic form of government, and that form, we dare hope, has been sufficiently explained in the Introduction and in the course of our historical discussions. The Pilgrims even never wanted a unity of church and state—not even that. They did not limit the rights of suffrage to churchmembers, like their brethren in Massa-

*In connection with this point see:

John Calvin, Institutes, IV, 20, 9.

Dr. W. M. McPheeters, Art. "Theocracy," Intern. Stand. Bib. Encycl.

Dr. A. Kuyper, Gemeene Gratie, vl. I, p. 76, vl. III, p. 211.

Dr. K. F. Keil, Introduction to the O. T., vl. I, p. 266.

L. Berkhof, Beknopte Bybelsche Hermeneutiek, p. 158; Life under the Law in a Pure Theocracy.

Dr. H. Bavinck, Dogmatiek, vl. IV, 2nd Ed., p. 426.

Groen van Prinsterer, Ongeloof en Revolutie, ps. 49–58.

chusetts. (That also the Massachusetts men never entertained the idea of a theocracy, will appear in another connection.)

Neither have the Pilgrims ever championed the Divine-Right-of-Kings theory. Calvinism does not believe in the divine right of kings or government officials; "divine right," namely, as the term is used in modern times. The boastful utterances of James I, that he could do with the common herd as he pleased, were more obnoxious to English Calvinists than to any other class of citizens. The liberty-loving soul of the Calvinist refuses absolutely to stand for this divine-right talk, and it appears to us that he has given a better account of himself in this matter than any of his neighbors. But —let us distinguish! The Calvinist *does* believe in the divine origin of royal rights *so far as they go*. He does not believe in the Droit divin, in the accepted meaning of that term. He *does* believe, and with all his heart, in the Scriptural truth, "By Me kings reign, and princes decree justice. By me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth." The Pilgrims, therefore, abhorred the Droit divin theory. But they also abhorred the direct antithesis of this theory—that of the Contrat social. They shunned the idea of a government with unlimited powers, but they would have shunned in an equal measure a government that claimed to have derived its powers from the people as such,—a government that was founded upon a mere "contrat social." The Contrat social theory, however, was not prominent at the time in which our Pilgrims lived. Rousseau was not yet born. The bold and phantastic and humanistic eighteenth century was as yet far in the distance. And therefore Bacon's words are to the point,—"It must not be supposed that those men in the cabin of the Mayflower had formed a system of political philosophy, still less that they had adopted

the theory which deduces all social rights and duties from an imaginary social compact. . . . As they formed a church, sixteen years before, by the simple method of a covenant, it was natural for them to use the same method in forming a state.''*

That the Pilgrims believed the government to be a divine institution they indicated in the heading of their Compact, which reads, ''In the name of God. Amen.'' Any one that is at all acquainted with the men and the times that we are dealing with will at once admit, that this heading, or introduction, is more than a mere formal beginning or, perhaps, an ostentatious ''leader.'' You will not find the first beginning of ostentation in the body of the Compact; it is severely sober thruout. You would be illogical in trying to find it in the introduction. No, the men of the Mayflower meant every single word that they put into that very brief introductory sentence. ''In the name of God. Amen.'' It can mean nothing else or less than, ''By the authority of God, in accordance with the ordinances of God, we organize ourselves into a civil body politic.'' And the ''Amen'' which follows simply strengthens this important assertion, in true Biblican fashion. Even the solemn expression, ''in the presence of God,'' goes to show the correctness of our interpretation. These were men that lived and acted ''coram Deo,'' as the motto of Calvin ran.

This covenanting and combining themselves ''into a civil body politic'' indicates the belief on the part of the signatories that any group of people, honestly compelled thereto by circumstances, have the right not only, but also the solemn obligation, to become instruments in the hand of God for the instituting and shaping

*Leonard Bacon, Genesis of the N. E. Churches, p. 309.

of a government, this government thus becoming at once the representative and servant of the Most High, and hence worthy of honor and respect,—and nevertheless at all times limited and controlled in its various actions by the same instruments that brought about its establishment—the people.

That the Pilgrims meant exactly this and nothing else, that we have interpreted their words as they themselves would have done it, is clearly and convincingly shown by a host of practical examples, as they are found in the historical records of New Plymouth.

On the eastern coast of the American continent, Calvinism, for the first time in the entire Christian era, was to show its beauty and its strength. "The world which the enterprising genius of Columbus had revealed to the European nations was a theatre on which new maxims of government and new forms of religion were to be subjected to the test of experiment."* A government was to be established in the new world "on the basis of democratic liberty":—"The citizens of the United States should . . . cherish the memory of those who founded a state on the basis of democratic liberty; the fathers of the country; the men who, as they first trod the soil of the new world, scattered the seminal principles of republican freedom and national independence."—"(When the Pilgrims landed) democratic liberty and independent Christian worship at once existed in America."† "The emigrants who fixed themselves on the shores of America in the beginning of the seventeenth century severed the democratic principle from all the principles which repressed it in the old communities of Europe, and transplanted it unalloyed to the New

*Neal, Puritans, vl. I, p. 270.
†Bancroft, Hist. of U. S., vl. I, ps. 313, 323.

World. It has there been allowed to spread in perfect freedom, and to put forth its consequences in the laws by influencing the manners of the country.''* And Doyle expresses the same idea in these words, ''In New England Calvinism had for the first time a free and open field for political action. There, accordingly, we see displayed to the utmost its special characteristics.''† Profoundly significant, therefore, both from the standpoint of the Calvinistic believer and with respect to political science in general, was this act of the men of the Mayflower. That they themselves realized this significance will become evident as we go on.

9. The Pilgrims institute their government ''for (their) better ordering and preservation.'' According to Calvinism governments do not find their origin in creation or a creational ordinance, but in the ''covenant of common grace'' (to use a modern appellation), the covenant that God established with Noah, immediately after the flood. The antediluvian world had been destroyed because of its gross wickedness, and now God, in order to place a restraint upon sin, gives many promises of various kind and establishes certain ordinances. One of these ordinances deals with manslaughter, and man is ordered to take the life of anyone guilty of murdering his fellow-man. In that commandment Calvinists find the beginning of governments as we know them. Governments, then, exist ''for the better ordering and preservation'' of human life and institutions. That is *the* raison d'ètre of all governments. Any government that wants to do more than that exceeds its divinely established bounds. The Pilgrims desired the greatest freedom possible, freedom at all times, freedom in every

*De Tocqueville, Democracy in America, p. 12.

†J. A. Doyle, Engl. Colonies in America, vl. II, p. 8.

field of activity, but they recognized the fact of sin and the power of sin,—sin which always, by nature, is detrimental to true freedom,—and they desired a government in order that the liberties which they cherished so fondly might be maintained and preserved.

10. The "better ordering and preservation" was what we might call the "nearest" aim in the establishment of the Pilgrim government, the "furtherance of the ends aforesaid" was the ultimate aim. These "ends aforesaid" were the glory of God, the advancement of the Christian faith, and the honor of the king and country. As we have already commented on these points, we shall proceed to consider the next point in the text of the Compact.

11. "Just and equal laws" the Pilgrims desired. Is not that expression American to the core? Does it not sound like the prelude of those momentous creations that were, in ages yet to come, to be produced on American soil—the Declaration of Independence, the national constitution, and many state constitutions? *Just* laws they were to be, that is, laws that were in harmony with the absolute justice of the Creator, of the Fons Juris. *Just* laws, in contradistinction with the laws of the mother country, which were characterized by intolerance, class-distinction, hereditary privileges, et cetera. And also *equal* laws; laws based upon the indestructible maxim that all men, *as men*, are free and equal before the face of their Creator.

12. The Compact further speakes of "laws, ordinances, acts, constitutions, and offices." It seems to us that only men with a broad outlook in the future could have penned a series of appellations as we have here. Would a little group of men that intended to found only a "colony," and that saw nothing in the future but a small, insignificant, colonial possession of

the British crown, have used such terms? We think not. And strong their faith, and ardent their hope, and fiery and profound their enthusiasm appears, when we read, in addition to the series just quoted, that the Pilgrims wish to establish such laws, ordinances, et cetera, "from time to time." They almost acted the part of prophets here. It looks as though an inspired soul had moved the pen that worded this document. They were about to begin great things, and they knew it. They were to become the founders of an empire, of a world-power, and it would seem as though they felt it in an unconscious way. The Calvinistic fathers of the great American republic—how marvellous their faith, like that of the grand Hebrew Sheik, the father of believers; how unbreakable their determination and will-power, like adamant; how irrepressible their courage—fierce, yea, leonine! Americans may thank God for such ancestors. Not all nations have received the privilege of being able to point to such noble beginnings.

13. These laws, et cetera, shall not be enacted for the benefit of any tyrant or class of tyrants, but "for the *general* good of the colony." This "general good" is to be the measure by which the lawmakers are to go. It is for this general good that they have been called into being, and as a natural consequence they must let themselves be guided by the same.

14. Only of a government that answers all the foregoing requirements and agrees with each and every aim expressed can the Pilgrims declare wholeheartedly, "Unto which we promise all due submission and obedience." If the future citizens should be disappointed with one or another government official, they will oust him in their elections. They will refuse to stand for any dilly-dallying. But if the parties elected show themselves true servants and representatives of the Sov-

ereign in heaven, they will obey them, they will show "all due submission and obedience." Submission and obedience to the objects of their own choice, to men that they themselves have placed in their peculiar position,—because in choosing them they were nothing but humble instruments in the hand of God Almighty.

In this fashion the Pilgrims laid the foundation of the American Republic. They became the fathers of the American type of democracy and democratic freedom. It was the Calvinistic type of Christianity that led these men to do what they did. We are thankful to such an eminent authority as Henri Baudrillart for his plain testimony in this connection,—"Did not the ideas of equality and Christian brotherhood, as applied to society, manifest themselves at the time of the foundation of the English colonies of America? Who, then, will deny that American democracy was born of Christianity?"*

The question may be raised, If the Pilgrims were so set upon recognizing James I as their king, and not the slightest thought of separation from the mother country arose in their minds, how could they strive for an altogether different form of government? The answer is simple. Their geographical separation from the home country necessitated a large measure of self-government. Was it necessary, in order to remain loyal to the home country, to make an exact copy of the institutions found at home? Not at all. Then the emigrants put the question to themselves, Is the English form the *ideal* form of government? And the answer was, In no wise. Which form *is* the ideal one? That of a Christian democracy. These Calvinists that migrated to the later United States did not cling scrupulously to a mere

*Henri Baudrillart, member of the Institute of France, in Lalor's Cyclopædia of Pol. Science, vl. I, p. 757.

form or *type* of government. One of them, Sir Henry Vane, a governor of Massachusetts, made the following statement, only a small number of years after the landing of the Pilgrims,—"Antient Foundations, when once become destructive to those very ends for which they were first ordained, and prove hinderances, to the good and enjoyment of humane societies, to the true Worship of God, and the Safety of the People, are for their sakes, and upon the same Reasons to be altered, for which they were first laid. In the way of God's Justice they may be shaken and removed, in order to accomplish the Counsels of His Will, upon such a State, Nation, or Kingdom, in order to His introducing a righteous Government, of His own framing."*

As soon as the Pilgrims had settled in their new abode the provisions of the Compact were carried out and a government was established. The frame of the civil government in New Plymouth was as follows: A governor was chosen by all the male colonists that were of age. Five assistants were chosen, to restrict the power of the governor. These, together with the governor, formed a Council. The people frequently gathered to pass judgment on executive questions. At first the whole body of male inhabitants constituted the Legislature, but later on, with the increase in population and the extension of area, a system of representation was introduced. Representative democracy had existed in the Reformed and Presbyterian (Calvinistic) churches for a long time; now it also existed in the state. We take liberty to quote in this connection a celebrated authority on international law. Says this keen-sighted scholar,—"Until modern times democracy nowhere ap-

*Acts of the Commissioners of the United Colonies of N. E., compiled by David Pulsifer, 1643–1651, vl. I, p. 15.

peared with such brilliancy as among the Greeks . . . The period of the Middle Ages was not favorable to the democratic form of government . . . Even in the cities the aristocratic element soon regained the upper hand (after some futile attempts in another direction). This is true even of the Swiss towns and provinces, which in their struggles with princes and nobles, asserted their independence and maintained popular freedom. In the cities either a patriarchate was established over the citizens, or the citizens of municipalities formed an aristocracy, to whom the rural population was subject. In the provinces the old rural population took precedence of newcomers; and in many families the public offices were almost hereditary. A *great change was first operated in North America.* In the new world a new form of the state appeared, representative democracy, a form of democracy very different from the radical democracy of ancient Greece.''*

The Plymouth colonists remained under the guidance of their reverend pastor, John Robinson, even after they had settled in the new world. This is clearly shown by the following instance: The Pilgrims had left their pastor behind, who was to sail for America some time later with the remainder of the Leyden colony. They were, therefore, without a spiritual shepherd. No one could administer the sacraments for the American part of the colonists, for, according to strict Reformed rule, only an ordained pastor is allowed to do this. Elder Brewster, who was virtually the leader of the New Plymouth men, wrote to Robinson, asking him whether in these exceptional circumstances he, Brewster, as a ruling elder, could not be permitted to administer the sacraments. A strongly negative reply came from Leyden,

*Professor J. C. Bluntschli, Heidelberg, in Lalor's Cycl., vl. I, p. 765.

and Brewster never once attempted to act contrary to the advice of his spiritual leader.

But Robinson's controlling power was enhanced when, time after time, other groups of Pilgrims left Leyden and joined their brethren on the New England coast. These men had undergone the noble influence of Robinson's preaching still longer than the men of the Mayflower, and they were heartily welcomed by the older settlers. In 1629 two Pilgrim companies left Leyden. They were very small, but, as Governor Bradford wrote, "they were such as feared God and were to us both welcome and useful for the most part." Several other Pilgrim-families migrated from Leyden to the far west at the time when the Massachusetts Bay Company sent its three ministers of the Gospel to New England—of whom we shall speak anon. Consider the length of time that these emigrants had spent in Holland, in republican Holland, where in 1579 the famous Union of Utrecht had been concluded (a full half century ago, therefore), at which time the following momentous words had been written down, indicating the advanced, hitherto unheard of, standpoint that Dutch Calvinists had taken,—"Midts dat een yder particulier in syn Religie vry zal moghen blyven, ende dat men niemandt, ter cause van de Religie, zal moghen achterhalen, ofte ondersoecken."* We shall see later on how this spirit of religious freedom had influenced the Pilgrims.

Of the hardships that these brave men encountered in the first years of their residence in America we shall not attempt to speak. That would take us beyond the

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*"That each person shall remain free in his religion, and that no one shall be pursued or examined on account of his religion."—To be found in—Pieter Paulus, Verklaring der Unic van Utrecht, vl. I, ps. 229, 230. The quotation is part of the Utrecht Articles.

scope of the present work. More important, for our purpose, is the fact that the settlers were in perfect unison as regards their principles and articles of belief, and that they exerted themselves to the utmost in preserving and maintaining what they held to be the truth. When some adventurers, that had journeyed across together with the Pilgrims, returned to England and spread the report that there was much controversy among the settlers about things religious, the latter wrote to England, "We know no such matter, for here was never any controversie or opposition, either publicke or private (to our knowledge) since we came." And when these same adventurers continued their slandering by spreading the report that the colonists did not catechize or instruct their children in reading, the retort came to England, "Neither is true; for diverse take pains with their owne as they can; indeede, we have no comone schoole for want of a fitt person, or hithertoo means to maintain one; though we desire now to begine."* This was written in the beginning of 1624, only a little better than three years after the Pilgrims had landed. Of their attempts at the education of their youth more anon.

Another point that may be mentioned here is the evidence that the Pilgrims gave of their Calvinistic conception of the relation of church and state. It is true, they had not yet reached the ideal in this respect. They still clung in some measure to the idea, that the state was to supervise the doings of the church. Before their flight to the Netherlands, while they were still in England, their ideas seem to have been more radically Calvinistic. They separated from the Anglican church, established an independent congregation in Scrooby.

*Both quotations may be found in Collections of the Mass. Hist. Soc., vl. III, 4th Ser., ps. 161, 162.

Their very refusal to recognize state-control, in the last analysis, caused their flight to Holland. But in Holland the Calvinists were more lenient with the government. The Dutch Calvinists stood for freedom in religion, that is, they refused to persecute Roman Catholics, Anabaptists, and others, because of their holding different opinions concerning God and the Bible, but they tried at the same time to become and to remain the special favorites of the government. The Erastian spirit was too strong yet at this time to be overcome by a thoroughgoing Calvinism. Even the great Synod of Dordrecht was not able to break the spell. When, therefore, the Pilgrims came in Holland it is but natural to suppose that they lost their keen edge in this respect and adjusted their views to those of their Dutch fellow-Calvinists. At any rate, we see this half-way policy continued for a considerable time in New England. In fact, many decades had to pass by before the New England Calvinists saw the faultiness of their ways and set themselves to correcting it once and for always.

But let us again distinguish! While their view of the *relation* of church and state was still hazy, their conception of the *essential difference* between the two institutions was wholly correct. They knew—church and state are two, not one. They absolutely withstood any attempts at amalgamation of the two institutions. Only in Israel, the people of the theocracy, were these two essentially united.

The exact attitude of the Pilgrims on these points may be seen in that splendid Introduction, written for a book of laws in the colony of New Plymouth,—a document in which the theocracy-phantom is shown to be a phantom indeed, and yet a document whose entire spirit is evinced by the one Bible verse, which precedes it,

"Bee Subject to every ordinance of Man for the Lord's sake." It follows:

"To our beloved Brethren and Neighbors the Inhabitants of the Jurisdiction of New Plymouth the Gouvernor, Asistants and Deputies Assembled at the generall Court of that Jurisdiction held at the towne of Plymouth the 29th of September, 1658, wisheth Grace and peace in our Lord Jesus Christ.

"It was the great priuiledge of Israell of old and soe was acknowlidged by them, Nehemiah the 9th and 13, that God gaue them right Judgments and true Lawes, for God being the God of order and not of confusion hath Comaunded in His word and put man into a Capasitie in some measure to obserue and bee guided by good and wholsome lawes; which are soe fare good and wholsome as by how much they are deriued from and agreeable to the Ancient platforms of Gods lawe; for although sundry particulars in the Juditiall lawe which was of old Injoyned to the Jewes did more espetially (att least in some cercomstances) befitt theire pedagogye; yett are they for the mayne soe exemplary, being grounded on principles of morall equitie as that all men, Christians espetially, ought alwaies to haue an eye thervnto in the framing of theire politique Constitutions; . . . Although we hold and doe afeirme that both Courts of Justice and Majestrates whoe are the minnesters of the lawe are esensially ciuill; Notwithstanding wee conceiue that as the majestrate hath his power from God, soe vndoubtedly hee is to Improue it for the honor of God and that in the vphoulding of His Worship and seruice and against the contrary, with due respect alsoe to be had vnto those that are really consciencyous though differing and decenting in som smaller matters . . . however, lett

this suffice the gentle Reader that our ends are: To the vtmost of our power in these our Indeauors to promote the comon good both of church and state; both at present and for future; and therfore soe fare as we haue aimed att the glory of God and comon good and acted according to God, bee not found a Resister but obeidient, lest therby thow resist the ordinance of God and soe Incurr the displeasure of God vnto damnation; Rom. 13-2.

By order of the Generall Court,

Nathaneell Morton,

Clark;''*

The New Plymouth Court even admitted that several heathen nations have had good laws, and they were good because "their exelency (was) founded upon grounds of morall equitie which hath its originall from the Law of God."

That the Pilgrims, notwithstanding their mistakes in this respect, really believed in the distinctness of church and state, is further evinced by many events of a minor nature. To make mention of but one of them —When Edward Winslow, a prominent Pilgrim, had lost his wife by way of an accident, he married, some time later, one Mrs. Susannah White, and of this marriage we have the following record,—"May 12, 1621, was ye first mariage in this place, which, according to ye laudable custome of ye Low-Cuntries (the Netherlands) in which they had lived, was thought most requisite to be performed by the magistrate, as being a civill thing . . . and most consonante to ye Scriptures, Ruth 4, and no where found in ye gospell to be layed on ye ministers as a part of their office. This decree or law about

*Records of the Colony of New Plymouth—Laws, by David Pulsifer, p. 72.

marriage was published by ye Stats of ye Low-Cuntries Anno: 1590 . . . (Petets Hist. fol: 1029)''*

Besides furnishing us a clear example of the belief entertained by the Pilgrims in the distinctness of church and state (a belief, it will be recalled, peculiar to Calvinism only at that time), this marriage-record supports our view, expressed a moment ago, that so far as the *relations* obtaining between church and state are concerned the Pilgrims were to a great extent influenced by the practices of the Dutch Calvinists. It may be stated, as a note of interest in this connection, that for a period of sixty years no marriage or funeral ceremonies were held in the churches. The immigrants well saw that such and similar ceremonies were the remnants of Roman Catholic times, and they carried their Puritanic principles to their natural consequence. Even the mere solemnization of marriages by the officers of the church, after the civil magistrate had done its part, was opposed by these men. In addition to the Word of God only the two Biblical sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, found a place in divine services. Everything else was contraband. These men also knew of the covenant of special grace, and of the great importance of marriages for the church of Jesus Christ, with a view to the children that might be born, but they could find nothing whatsoever in their Bible that gave them the right or liberty to insert, on that account, marriage ceremonies in their order of worship. The distinctness between the ecclesiastical and civil spheres in this respect was maintained by the Pilgrims better than by some Calvinists of the present day.

*History of Plymouth Plantation, by William Bradford; Coll. of Mass. Hist. Soc., vl. III, Ser. IV, p. 101.

In mentioning Petet's Hist. reference is made perhaps to La grande Chronique ancienne et moderne de Holland, Zelande, West-frise, Utrecht, Etc., by Jean Francois le Petit, 1601 and 1611.

In the church, in the state, in society, these brave men of the Mayflower, these fathers of the country, carried out the maxims of Calvinism, not only in the first years after their arrival in America, but for many decades to come, as we shall attempt to show. Never was a grander opportunity given to bring about the realization of lofty religious ideals. Never, in the times of Christendom, was the absolute sovereignty of the God of heaven more scrupulously reckoned with in the various spheres of human activity.

THE PURITAN MIGRATION

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CHAPTER IV

THE PURITAN MIGRATION

CONDITIONS in England had not improved since the death of James I. It will be recalled that the Puritans, upon the accession of Elizabeth, entertained strong hopes for a redress of their grievances. They were disappointed. Similar hopes were entertained upon the accession of the Stuart King, James I. Again they were disappointed. And once more it was hoped when Charles I came to the throne, in 1625, that the fortunes of the Puritans would change, and once more there was a sore disappointment. Charles, it was rumored, was a decided Protestant, and undoubtedly he would understand his Puritan subjects and meet their wishes at least in some respects. The Puritans grew stronger every year, controlled a majority in the House of Commons, and expected that the young king would hardly dare to oppose flagrantly and radically the desires of the people.

But the king appeared to be a second Rehoboam. He listened to foolish and anti-Puritan counsellors. The Duke of Buckingham and Bishop Laud saw that their chance had arrived, and they sought to influence the king as best they could. The divine right of kings was proclaimed from the pulpits of the Established church. The Non-conformists were denounced in the severest terms. To resist the will of the king, thus Dr. Mainwaring told his royal audience in a sermon, meant eternal damnation. Montague, a court chaplain, gave a strong Roman Catholic coloring to his sermons. "Both clergymen were sent to prison by order of Parliament for their public utterances, but both were set at liberty and made bishops by order of the king."

Three parliaments were summoned together by the king, and all of them dismissed. The king had decided to become legislator and ruler at the same time, and wished to use his parliaments as tools, blind and dumb tools. People were taxed without authority of the law or without the consent of parliament.

At the same time Bishop Laud was transforming the English church. "He severed the ties which had united the Reformed Churches of the continent with the Church of England. He held that ordination by bishops was essential to a valid ministry, and that the Reformed Churches of Switzerland and of Germany were not true Churches. The freedom of worship, which had been allowed to the Protestant refugees from the Low Countries and from France, was withdrawn, and those exiles were required to conform to the ritual of the Church of England, or to flee from the kingdom."*

In 1633, when Laud became Archbishop of Canterbury and thereby Primate of all England, his tyranny knew no bounds. But perhaps we have said enough to make plain that the true-blooded Puritans now found themselves under a regime whose practices were well-nigh unbearable. The fist of James had struck them, and struck them hard, but it had been a bare fist. Now came the "mailed fist" of Charles, and it not only hurt, but it wounded, it made bloody gashes. James had reached the limit. Charles went beyond. It would cost him his head. But the time for retaliation had not yet come, and the Puritans had but two alternatives—to remain in England, suffering, quivering under the lashes of the master, and, while bleeding from an hundred wounds, hoping against hope for daybreak and sunshine,—the

*Dr. E. H. Byington The Puritan in England and New England, p. 64.

daybreak of liberty with its remedial effects,—or to quit the country and journey to a place where they could be as free as a winged insect, dancing in the sunlight. The majority of them decided in favor of the former course, others chose the latter. The larger group decided to wait for the coming of Liberty; the smaller went to a place where Liberty was waiting for *them*. The Pilgrims by this time had obtained a good start; why could not the Puritans follow suit?

Let it be stated right here and now that the Puritans who left for the shores of New England did so only because of their religious convictions (not *ecclesiastical* or *dogmatic* convictions, because these terms are too limited in meaning), and that no material gain was ever the object of their attentions in this mighty undertaking. This has been imputed to them in the past, but historians making such and similar assertions must have little understanding of Puritan aims and motives, and, besides, of plain history. It is well to bear this in mind. If we know the *motives* of this Puritan movement, we shall understand the *actions* of the future New Englanders. The motive back of this settlement in a strange country was bound to determine the type of life that was to spring up on the western continent.

Of this Mr. Bryce tells us, "It was religious zeal and the religious conscience which led to the founding of the New England colonies two centuries and a half ago —those colonies (we take liberty to quote the well known authority further on this point) whose spirit has in such a large measure passed into the whole nation. Religion and conscience have been a constantly active force in the American commonwealth ever since, not indeed strong enough to avert many moral and political evils, yet at the worst times inspiring a minority with a courage and

ardor by which moral and political evils have been held at bay, and in the long run generally overcome.'"*

But let us see what these Puritan settlers themselves or the men of their own times had to say on the subject.

In 1629 (March 2) Matthew Cradock, governor of the Massachusetts Bay Company, residing in England, wrote to governor John Endicott, among other things, "We trust you will not be unmindful of the main end of our plantation . . . to bring the Indians to the knowledge of the Gospel . . ."† The Puritans sought religious and political freedom. For that purpose they went to New England. But at the same time the idea of receiving in this way such a grand opportunity to spread the Gospel among the aborigines filled their souls with holy enthusiasm, and at times made them call this missionary work "the main end" of their colonization efforts. The main end—for what they sought for themselves was freedom for souls that were already saved; the souls of the aborigines were in a lost condition, and to be instrumental in saving them was therefore a still nobler work. To be instrumental in saving a soul that is lost, and about to be lost eternally, is nobler and greater than to elevate the position of a soul that has already been saved. Hence, when this idea of propagating the Gospel truths took hold of the Puritans, it took precedence in their minds over any other. Not that the Puritans decided to leave England as a band of missionaries in our day decides to leave the mother-country, with the single purpose in mind of expanding the church of Jesus Christ. But *after* they had decided

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*James Bryce, The American Commonwealth, vl. II, 2nd Ed., p. 599.

†Leonard Bacon, Genesis of the N. E. Churches, p. 458.

to escape the tyranny of Charles and Laud, the missionary idea appealed to them most of all.

One of the "Planters," or settlers, expressed himself anent this matter as follows, "That which should most sway our hearts (in removing to New England) is the respect unto God's honor, which is much advanced by this work of replenishing the earth. First when the largeness of His bounty is tasted by settling of men in all parts of the world, whereby the extent of His munificence to the sons of men is discovered. . . . Secondly, God's honor must needs be much advanced, when, together with men's persons, religion is conveyed into the several parts of the world, and all quarters of the earth sound with His praise . . . ."

Can you desire a piece more Calvinistic in spirit? The same writer tells us that God caused America to be discovered and colonized in order that the Gospel might be proclaimed far and wide, first of all "for God's honour and glory and next men's salvation." He continues, "It were little less than impiety to conceive that God (whose will concurs with the lighting of a sparrow upon the ground) had no hand in directing one of the most difficult and observable works of this age; and as great folly to imagine that He who made all things, and consequently orders and directs them to His own glory, had no other scope but the satisfying of men's greedy appetites, that thirsted after the riches of that new found world."*

This writer considered Englishmen singled out for the purpose stated because they enjoyed, "the Religion Reformed (Calvinistic) . . . and (were) the most orthodox in (their) profession."

*The Planter's Plea, or, The Grounds of Plantations Examined, printed in London, 1630; to be found in Tracts and Other Papers, Etc. by Peter Force, VI. II, ps. 3 and 8.

As late as 1691 we find these words written, "There are none in the world that do more fully concur with the doctrine of the Church of England, contained in the Thirty-nine Articles, than do the Churches in New England, as is manifest from the Confession of their faith, published in the year 1680. Only as to liturgy and ceremonies they differ, for which cause alone it was that they, or their fathers, transported themselves into that American desert, as being desirous to worship God in that way which they thought was most according to the Scriptures."*

In or about 1630 a "Reverend Divine" wrote from New England to the mother country, "That which is our greatest comfort, and means of defence above all other is, that we have here the true Religion and holy Ordinances of Almighty God taught amongst us, Thanks be to God, we have plenty of preaching and diligent catechizing, with strict and careful exercise and good and commendable orders, to bring our people into a Christian conversation with whom we have to do withal. And thus we doubt not but God will be with us, and if God be with us, who can be against us?"†

Surely, one does not get the impression from such statements that at least one of the aims in settling in New England was "material gain." The writer has not been able to find one instance in the correspondence and other writings of the colonists which he had an opportunity to peruse, indicating that the Puritans had

*The Revolution in New England Justified, by "Several Gentlemen who were of Sir Edmond Androsse's Council," p. 5; to be found in Tracts, Etc., by Peter Force, vl. IV.

†New England's Plantation, or, A short and True Description of the Commodities and Discommodities of that Countrey, by a Reverend Divine now there resident; London, 1630; p. 14; found in Tracts, Etc., by Peter Force, vl. I.

any other aims besides that of glorifying God in the exercise of religious and political freedom and in the spread of the Gospel message. Bacon assures us that the letters from "the Companies" in England to the colonial governors "to us who read them today, seem almost like letters from the executive of a missionary society to a distant missionary."*

The Puritans gave us a fine example of how even ordinary business and matters of trade can be carried on "to the glory of God."

So much for the general aims of the men that left England to settle themselves upon the rather inhospitable shores of New England. We shall now follow them upon their hazardous journey and watch the personnel of this little, but dapper and courageous army.

In 1629, at Cambridge, an agreement was entered into for the settlement of New England. Men like John Winthrop, William Pynchon, Isaac Johnson, Thomas Dudley, and others of similar standing, became signatories to this document. In the previous year, however, John Endicott had already left for foreign shores, accompanied by some forty or fifty persons. Francis Higginson left in 1629, and four hundred came along with him. John Winthrop, the later governor, left in 1630, and a company of no less than eight hundred persons decided to join him and brave the hardships of the wilderness. When the ships which carried Higginson and his followers to the new world left the English coastal waters, the leader is reported to have summoned his men together, in order to address them as follows: "We will not say as the Separatists were wont to say at their leaving of England, Farewell, Babylon! farewell, Rome! but we will say, Farewell, dear England! fare-

*Leonard Bacon, Genesis of the N. E., Churches, p. 458.

well the Church of God in England, and all the Christian friends there; we do not go to New England as Separatists from the Church of England, though we cannot but separate from the corruptions in it; but we go to practice the positive part of Church reformation, and propagate the gospel in America.''*

To those who are wont to speak of the willful intolerance of the Puritans—Does the above quotation seem so extremely intolerant? But more of this intolerance later on.

The stream of immigration continued to flow. ''Up to the time of the meeting of the Long Parliament, in 1640, the average number of emigrants was about two thousand a year.''† Endicott and his following arrived in Naumkeag, where they found a small number of other settlers. The parties joined and the name Naumkeag was changed into Salem, meaning ''peace,'' because of the friendly settlement which had been made by Endicott's party with the earlier settlers. When the following companies of Puritans arrived Salem became at once the largest and strongest place in New England. Endicott was chosen governor of the colony. The form of government was democratic, the same as that of New Plymouth. In the following chapter we shall have occasion to dwell more broadly on the shape which the Puritan government assumed in this new place of habitation. At the same time we hope to point out the significance of the royal charters which both the New Plymouth and the Massachusetts colony obtained, and discuss the relations existing between the mother country and her daughters in the new world.

*Rev. J. Gregory, Puritanism in the Old World, and in the New, p. 252.

†Dr. E. H. Byington, The Puritan in England and New England, p. 71.

It may not be amiss to fix our attention for a moment upon the type and character of the men that composed these different immigrant companies. We do not have reference to their religious qualities, but to the station that these Calvinists occupied in general life, and to their personal characteristics, looked at from a general viewpoint.

Perhaps no party or group of men has ever been so much the object of misunderstanding, and consequential misrepresentation, as the Puritans. Various reasons may be suggested for this, but we shall devote no space to a lengthy enumeration. Only one of them do we call attention to. The Puritans, like other bodies of their kind, passed thru the successive stages of rise, ascendancy, and decline. The first stage is generally characterized by struggles of various kind, by purity of motives, and by an honest and brave personnel. The second stage, the stage of triumph, finds some men as brave and true as ever, but dazzles others, while many that used to stand outside come truckling nearer and wheedle themselves into favor with the men in power. The third stage is usually marked by degeneration, loss of power, a slow ebbing away of the tide, a gradual process of subjection to the next triumphant party, unless a regeneration take place and the whole course be started anew. Puritanism has often been pictured to us as it existed in the second or third stage. And even when the Puritans of the first stage were described, the men of Elizabeth's, James' and Charles' times, authors were seldom able to refrain from introducing the less favorable features which characterized Puritanism later on. If we want to describe the Puritans as Puritans, that is, the men that were Puritans because they were Calvinists, and for no other reason, we must limit ourselves strictly to the first stage of their operations.

"The Puritanism of the first forty years of the seventeenth century," says Palfrey, "was not tainted with degrading or ungraceful associations of any sort." And he adds significantly, "The rank, the wealth, the chivalry, the genius, the learning, the accomplishments, the social refinements, and elegance of the time were largely represented in its ranks."* It was the Puritans of this period who settled in New England. "We do well to remember," admonishes Dr. Byington, "that the great Puritan migration to New England took place in the best period of Puritanism, before the party had been weakened by those who came to it after its victory had been won. Our forefathers brought to New England the best that the Old England had to give."†

The Puritans were great friends of learning. An explanation of this phenomenon the reader will have found in our Introduction. Many of them were graduates from Cambridge or Oxford. "Those who came to New England were fitted by their abilities and training to be the founders of States. An unusual proportion of them were graduates from the English universities. Others who were not graduates were well read in history and literature, and in theology."‡ No stronger proof of the learning of these men can be adduced than that of the many books and pamphlets which they wrote—literary productions that influenced the life not only of New England, but of Old England as well. These books are not only a credit to their authors, but to the readers also. Thorough education was a general asset. In this connection the remarks of Mr. Palfrey may be cited—remarks that may create wonderment with some of our

*Palfrey, Hist. of New England, vl. I, p. 279.

†E. H. Byington, The Puritan in England and New England, p. 79.

‡Idem, p. 91.

readers,— "To the Puritans the Tory historian Hume ascribed the liberty of England. But the Puritans never struck decisively for English freedom, till Independency obtained the control of the Parliament and army, in 1645, and it was the pens of learned ministers living in New England that in Old England raised Independency to the position of command. It was Hooker, of Connecticut, and Cotton and Shepard and Allen and Norton and Mather, of Massachusetts, that organized the victories of Fairfax and Cromwell. In former times this relation was understood, however now forgotten. We may look for England in England, and find nothing but New England."*

Nor must the mistaken impression remain that these early New Englanders were a sort of extraordinary, supernatural human beings, men that were *in* this world but that refused absolutely to have anything to do with it. They were no mysticists, no Anabaptists, and when Anne Hutchinson showed some very decided leanings in that direction she was encountered forthwith by the organized effort of nearly all churches in New England. The Puritan was not immoderately strict by nature, or by reason of doctrine. The Puritans of that earlier time did not break "with the harmless gayeties of the world about them. They entered with zest into the sports of English country life. They were not iconoclasts until they were convinced that the High Church party were making use of music and art to divert men from the true religious life. That which we call the sternness of the Puritan spirit was the result, in large part, of persecution and of the struggle to maintain the truth."† But more of this anon.

*Quoted by W. D. Northend, The Bay Colony, Boston, 1896.

† Byington, The Puritan, etc., p. 79.

Were the Puritans that found their way to the coast of New England Calvinists, in the *scientific* sense of the term? They were. It seems to us we have already proved our case. And yet it may not be altogether a thing superfluous to cast, successively, the spotlight upon the main performers in this grand drama of human struggle and endeavor. He who knows William the Silent, Marnix van Sint Aldegonde, Petrus Dathenus, and others of like repute, knows the principles and character of the founders of the Dutch Republic. He who knows Rousseau, Robespierre, Danton, and Condorcet, knows the principles and character of the French revolutionary men. And so also, he who knows Endicott, Winthrop, Cotton, and some others, knows the principles and character of the great heroes that became, all of them, empire-builders, fathers of one of the greatest and mightiest nations that ever found abode upon the astral sphere which we call Earth.

John Endicott, the first governor of the Massachusetts Bay colony, was a man of strictly Calvinistic principles. He was extremely bold, but his boldness was due to his profound convictions. At times this boldness took on the form of impetuosity. In October, 1634, he caused the red cross to be cut from the flag of the train band at Salem. As this flag was the national British ensign, Endicott's act caused great anxiety among certain of his fellow-colonists. The leader, however, was impatient of anything that smacked of Roman Catholicism, and the sight of a cross was unbearable to him. Byington describes Endicott as a man "disposed to favor extreme measures for the maintenance of the standard of orthodoxy."* Endicott was one of the leaders in

*E. H. Byington, The Puritan in England and New England, p. 203.

bringing about the organization of a truly "Reformed congregation." He embraced all the doctrinal tenets of John Calvin, and tried to carry them out in practice. It is true, he did not permit anyone who differed from him in religious or political principles to reside within the limits of the colony, but in regard to this matter there were extenuating circumstances, as we have shown in a former connection and as we hope to demonstrate still more broadly in the following chapter.

John Winthrop was the second governor of the Massachusetts Bay colony, and was as much a Calvinist as Endicott was. "Religion had a controlling power over all his conduct; in no one was its *all-pervading* influence more visible or conspicuous." In one of the public squares in the city of Boston, Mass., there is a statue of a man, with the Bible in one hand and the charter of the colony in the other. That man represents John Winthrop. The sculptor could not have expressed the life and thought of this great man in a better form. The Bible in the one hand, in the other the colonial charter,—it is the exact picture of a Calvinistic statesman. Winthrop was of a more quiet temper than Endicott, was dispassionate in all his actions, but hewed to the line with no less exactness than did his forerunner.

Thomas Hooker was also one of the leading men in early New England. He became the founder of Connecticut. Having been persecuted in old England, he had found a place of refuge in Delft, the Netherlands, where he remained for three years, imbibing the Dutch Calvinistic spirit of freedom and democracy. He was more advanced in his ideas than any of the Massachusetts leaders, and as a Calvinist was one of the first to break radically and absolutely with the mediaeval

tendencies of intoleration and unwarranted prejudice, which characterized—children of their time as they were—so many other Calvinists. In this respect the Rev. Hooker, as a minister of the Word, led his flock in the Scriptural and Calvinistic pastures of real freedom. He carried the tenets of Calvinism to their logical consequence. He did so as the father of the colony of Connecticut. And Connecticut, according to all reliable authorities, was the prototype of our own United States of America. Hooker, along with Davenport and Cotton, was invited to attend the Westminster Assembly, that famous "Calvinistic" assembly, but was unable to do so. Some of the ideas of this truly great man may be obtained from the following passages, the former written to Governor Winthrop, the latter occurring in one of his sermons,—"In matters which concern the common good, a general council, chosen by all (not by churchmembers only, therefore), to transact business which concerns all, I conceive most suitable to rule, and safe for the relief of the whole." . . . "The foundation of authority is laid in the free consent of the people; . . . the choice of public magistrates belongs unto the people, by God's own ordinance; . . . they who have power to appoint officers and magistrates, have the right to set the bounds and limitations of the power and place of those who are called." It will be observed that Hooker did not teach what is in our own day called popular sovereignty; he did not believe that the people were the ultimate source of sovereignty, or power to rule. For that reason he speaks of "God's own ordinance." But he did believe in this, that the people were the means which God had chosen to bring about a constituted government. And so the words of Lincoln, in the famous Gettysburg address, concerning the rights of the people, were uttered already in the

early part of the seventeenth century by Thomas Hooker, the father of Connecticut, the Calvinist "par excellence."

John Davenport was the founder of the New Haven colony, and he was as radical a Calvinist as could be found on New England soil. The very origin of the colony and present city of New Haven can be found in nothing but the unflinching and uncompromising religious character of the Rev. Mr. Davenport. His strenuous opposition to the so-called Half-way Covenant, by which concessions were made in later years to men of lighter calibre, indicates the strictness of his principles and his loyalty to the faith of the Genevan Reformer. Thru Davenport's influence a civil compact was entered into in the colony of New Haven, in which the inhabitants agreed "to be governed by the rules which the Scriptures hold out, not only in the gathering and ordering of a church, but also in all civil affairs."

Francis Higginson also deserves special mention. He was one of the leading ministers in the Massachusetts colony. What we have said concerning him in other connections may suffice to show that in Higginson we have a man of exactly the same convictions as those which Hooker, Davenport, and the other leaders entertained. In a spirit of gratitude and triumph he wrote to England that they had "the true religion and holy ordinances of God" taught amongst them. He was a Cambridge graduate, and in the old home land was persecuted as a Non-Conformist preacher. Being a man of unusual gifts he exerted a profound influence upon the life of the Bay colony.

Roger Williams was also a Calvinist, except in the matter of the covenant of grace. In his covenant theory Williams was a Baptist. He may be classed with Hooker as one who wanted to carry the principles of Calvinism

to their logical consequence. Two of these principles especially Williams defended with might and main,—the freedom and sanctity of the human conscience and the distinction of church and state. So manfully and determinately did he carry on his fight that he soon found himself in conflict even with those who were his brethren in faith and doctrine. It is a question, to our mind, whether Williams always used a sufficient amount of tact in the propagation of his principles. But for the rest—we cannot but admire the valor, the true heroism that this young minister displayed. We gladly overlook some of his excesses, realizing the difficult position in which he found himself. Roger Williams, by his study of the Dutch language, was able to acquaint himself with the Dutch Calvinistic literature of the age, and this has undoubtedly aided him greatly in the forming of his convictions. His life was a life of continued persecutions, until he finally became the founder of Providence, in the state of Rhode Island, and became instrumental in organizing a free church in a free state, both of them composed of free individuals. Says Staples, in his Annals of Providence, "Here, then, was established a Christian community based upon the great principles of perfect religious liberty, as contended for by Mr. Williams, both at Salem and at Plymouth."* In 1638 a compact was entered into by the men of Providence, running as follows: "We whose names are hereunder, desirous to inhabit in the town of Providence, do promise to subject ourselves in active or passive obedience to all such orders or agreements as shall be made for public good of the body, in an orderly way, by the major assent of the present inhabitants, masters of families, incorporated together into a town-fellowship, and such others whom they shall admit unto them, only in civil

*Quoted in "Roger Williams," by A. M. Eaton.

things.'' Notice that only ''masters of families'' were to have the rights of suffrage. Roger Williams stood for the same thing that present day Calvinists regard as the ideal and which especially the Calvinists in Holland, under Dr. A. Kuyper, are holding aloft (granting, as they do, certain exceptions)—the rights of suffrage for the heads of families alone (huismanskiesrecht). Calvinists do not believe the individuals to be the units of which states are composed. Their claim is that the unit of the state is the family, and even such a rigorous individualist as Roger Williams did not lose sight of this fact. Notice, furthermore, the four last words of the compact. At the time they were the most important in the entire document. The thought expressed by them was to become fundamental in the structure of American national laws that was to be raised a century and a half later.

John Cotton must also be mentioned, the famous pastor of the First Church in Boston, Mass. The Rev. Mr. Cotton was a graduate of Cambridge, had been a Fellow and a Tutor in Emanuel College, England, and had been for more than twenty years the vicar of the Church of St. Buttolph, in Boston, Old England. From this church, ''perhaps the most stately parish church in England, a cathedral in size and beauty,'' he came ''to preach the Gospel within the mud walls, and under the thatched roof of the first meeting-house in Boston.'' As to his learning, Cotton Mather says of him, ''He was a walking library, a universal scholar, an indefatigable student, the Cato of his age for his gravity, but having a glory with it which Cato had not.''* This Cotton, also, was a thoroughgoing Calvinist. It was for that very reason that he was ''harried'' out of England. ''Cotton pro-

*E. H. Byington, The Puritan in England and New England, p. 121.

fessed that he loved to sweeten his mouth with a piece of Calvin before he went to sleep. His emotional rendering of Calvinistic doctrines wrought strongly on the people of the new Boston and his advent was followed by widespread religious excitement. More people were admitted to the church in Boston in the earlier months of Cotton's residence than to all the other churches in the colony.''* This man's influence was tremendous. ''Such was the authority . . . Mr. Cotton had in the hearts of the people, that whatever he delivered in the pulpit was soon put into an order of Court, if of a civil, or set up as a practice in the church, if of an ecclesiastical concernment.''†

Thomas Dudley, Henry Vane, John Norton, Increase Mather, Samuel Skelton, John Eliot, the ''apostle'' to the Indians, in fact, all of the leading men in the Puritan colonies, were Calvinists. And as the leaders were, so were the people. Of the missionary to the Massachusetts Indians, John Eliot, a document is extant which shows the splendid Calvinistic spirit of the times. A considerable number of Indians had been converted to Christianity, and the time had arrived for their organization into an ''Indian Community.'' A strictly democratic form of government was adopted, according to the advice of apostle Eliot. They also entered into a civil compact, which was written by Mr. Eliot, in the language of the Massachusetts Indians. The document, written under the date of September 24, 1651, runs as follows:

''We doe give ourselves and our children unto God, to be His people. He shall rule us in all our affairs, not only in our religion, and affairs of the Church, (these we desire as soon as we can, if God will), *but also in all our works and affairs of this world.* God shall rule

*E. Eggleston, Beginners of a Nation, p. 329.
†Hubbard, History of Massachusetts, p. 182.

over us. The Lord is our Judge. The Lord is our Lawgiver. The Lord is our King. He will save us. The Wisdome which God hath taught us in his Booke, that shall guide us and direct us in the way. O Jehovah, teach us wisdome to find out thy wisdome in thy Scriptures. Let the grace of Christ help us, because Christ is the wisdome of God. Send Thy Spirit into our hearts, and let it teach us. Lord take us to be thy people, and let us take thee to be our God.''*

Of this brief document the same may be said as of the principles of all the men whom we have mentioned,—it does not mean to establish a ''theocracy.'' Our fathers were more acute on dogmatic and ecclesiastical points than we in our day are. They had sense enough not to wish to return to the Old Dispensation, the Jewish era in the history of the Church. What they wanted is this: to have religion control, not part, but *all* of life. ''Calvinism is Theism come to its rights.'' These men of early New England believed in God, but not in a God whose sphere of jurisdiction is limited to a certain *part* of life, and that a *part* the boundaries of which have been fixed by those frail little creatures which we call men. They believed in God, but not in a God whose sovereign power is limited to the Church. They believed in the God of the Bible, in the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the God of Moses and Isaiah, in the God of Christ Jesus himself, in the God of Wyclif and John Calvin. They believed in the God of an absolute sovereignty, in Him, before whom the mighty ones of this world are but dust and ashes,—in Him who is the Creator of all spheres of life, the heavenly Proprietor of all things existing,—in Him whose will to perform, in the state, in society, in the church, is life, life everlasting. To our fathers this world-life amounted to less than noth-

*Mass. Hist. Society Coll., 3d Series, vl. IV, p. 172.

ing—without God. Every bit of their daily task would have been soul-killing drudgery, servility of the meanest type—without God. In utter despair they would have exclaimed, "Vanitas vanitatis, omnia est vanitas!"—without God. In sad, plaintive tones they would have sung of the glories of death, the great Finisher, and the blackest pessimism would have caused a shudder to run thru their ranks as soon as they touched upon the theme of life—without God.

But God *was! Their* God was! He existed, absolute in sovereignty, illimitable in power,—requiring of every creature of His hand that not a foot should be moved nor a hand be lifted up, unless His glorification be meant. God *was!* Rapture filled their souls! Upon their lips was a song. What was it? One of these insipid, flabby productions of a certain kind of modern Christianity?—It was Calvinism's song. It was the glorious hymn that Paul sang: "For of Him, and through Him, and unto Him, are *all things.* To Him be the glory for ever!"*

It still remains for us to examine the relationship existing between the Puritans of the Massachusetts Bay colony, together with those of the other settlements, and the Pilgrimfathers in the colony of New Plymouth. In tracing the workings of Calvinism in this country this examination, brief though it be, is a matter imperative. Did both groups, Puritans and Pilgrims, stand for the same Calvinistic principles? If so, that would be of extreme significance. Or did these two groups differ from each other on certain essential points?

In answer to that it may be stated that all the New England immigrants, with the exception of a few scattered individuals, adhered to the faith and doctrine of

* Romans 11, verse 36, R. V.

John Calvin. They all hated Romanism. They all were averse to the unbiblical practices in the Established Church. They all wanted a thorough reformation. The only thing in which they differed, at times, was the method by which this reformation should be brought about. It was a question of method, rather than of principle. The Pilgrimfathers, the Separatists, the Independents, wanted congregations that were strictly independent. The Romish hierarchical system had driven them to the opposite extreme. They tried to defend their standpoint by quoting the Scriptures. The Puritans, on the other hand, were not wholly averse to the Established or State Church of England, but refused to conform to its unbiblical practices. A part of the Puritans, thru their prolonged correspondence with the Calvinistic churches on the European continent, were rather strongly inclined towards Presbyterianism. As will be seen from the following, a process of amalgamation soon became evident among the different groups of Calvinists, and the boundary lines, for a while at least, became quite indistinct. So much for the church life. As to the other spheres of human activity, it cannot be denied that the Pilgrims were more advanced in certain respects than the Puritans. They were more tolerant. Their courts of justice stood on a higher plane, in that respect, than those of the Puritans. Undoubtedly much of this was due to their long residence in the land of toleration and freedom, the Netherlands. The Pilgrims, also, carried out more logically and consistently in practical life the principle of the distinction of church and state. But fundamentally Pilgrims and Puritans were wholly at one.

As soon as the Puritans breathed the free air of the American wilderness their feeling of antipathy towards the Pilgrims (the Pilgrims being "Separatists") sub-

sided and they sought closer union with them. Already on May 21, 1629, Governor Endicott of the Puritan colony dispatched the following letter to Governor Bradford, of New Plymouth:

"To the Worshipful and my right worthy Friend, WILLIAM BRADFORD, Esq., Governor of New Plymouth, these:

"RIGHT WORTHY SIR,—It is a thing not usual that servants to one Master and of the same household should be strangers; I assure you I desire it not—nay, to speak more plainly, I can not be so to you. God's people are marked with one and the same mark, and sealed with one and the same seal, and have, for the main, one and the same heart guided by one and the same Spirit of truth; and where this is there can be no discord—nay, here must needs be sweet harmony. The same request with you I make unto the Lord, that we may, as Christian brethren, be united by a heavenly and unfeigned love, bending all our hearts and forces in furthering a work beyond our strength, with reverence and fear fastening our eyes always on Him that only is able to direct and prosper all our ways.

"I acknowledge myself much bound to you for your kind love and care in sending Mr. Fuller among us (a physician and deacon of the Pilgrim church); and I rejoice much that I am by him satisfied touching your judgments of the outward form of God's worship. It is, as far as I can gather, no other than is warranted by the evidence of truth, and the same which I have professed and maintained ever since the Lord in mercy revealed himself to me; being very far different from the common report that hath been spread of you touching that particular. But God's children must not look for less here below, and it is the great mercy of God that He strengthens them to go through with it.

"I shall not need at this time to be tedious unto you; for, God willing, I purpose to see your face shortly. In the mean time, I humbly take my leave of you, committing you to the Lord's blessed protection, and rest,

Your assured loving friend and servant,

JOHN ENDICOTT."

Again—the unity of Puritans and Pilgrims would insure united action in behalf of the principles of Calvinism. That unity was there. It produced golden fruit. Perhaps this concerted action of the New Englanders is best illustrated by a bit of church history.

The Puritan ministers Skelton and Higginson began to realize, shortly after their arrival here, that their ecclesiastical position was biblically untenable. The Massachusetts Bay Company had appointed them to be ministers of the Gospel among the migrating Puritans. They had not been called by any congregation. The governor, therefore, (this was again a wrong step, however) called a congregational meeting and Skelton and Higginson were duly elected pastor and teacher, respectively. Both were ordained ministers, but their functions differed in some measure, as their titles will indicate. Three or four of the "gravest" members laid hands on the newly elected men, and with prayers they were declared ministers of the Word. Both men had previously confessed that they believed in an inward and an outward call to the ministry, according to the tenets of the Reformed churches. All this we find recorded in a letter from a certain Charles Gott to Governor Bradford, dated at Salem, July 30, 1629.

The Puritans realized, however, that their church organization, even so, was still incomplete. Elders and deacons had to be chosen. But then the question arose, What is really the church of Christ in these parts? All

the people that came from England, without distinction? Finally a covenant was drawn up and the believers made confession in accordance with the same. Thus a real congregation was formed. But then it was seen that the former ordination of the two ministers was invalid. That had been done by the people at large. Calling and ordination were then repeated by the duly constituted church. "The former ordination had made them the ministers of a parish; this made them the presbyter-bishops of a New Testament church."

Immediately after these things had taken place representatives from the Plymouth church came and then "in behalf of their own church (that of the Pilgrims) they declared their approbation and concurrence." Says Mr. Bacon (we beg patience of the reader to quote this brilliant writer rather extensively), "By them (the representatives of the Pilgrim church, governor Bradford himself included) that elder church, cradled at Scrooby, nurtured and schooled at Leyden, and now at last victorious over the sufferings and temptations of the wilderness, greeted its younger sister, in apostolic fashion, with 'the right hand of fellowship'. The church that had been brought over the ocean now saw another church, the first-born in America, holding the same faith in the same simplicity of self-government under Christ alone. It had become manifest that, in the freedom of this great wilderness, there was no reason why the Separatist should separate from the Puritan, nor why the Puritan, who came to practice the positive part of church reformation, should purge himself from separatism. The first church formed in America was formed by a voluntary separation from the world and a voluntary gathering into Christian fellowship. Its charter was the New Testament, and from that charter it deduced its right to exist and to govern itself by officers

of its own choice and ordination. It acknowledged no king in Christ's kingdom save Christ Himself, and no priest in the spiritual temple save the one High-priest within the veil. Robinson had not lived to see that day; but he had foreseen it, and his prophecy was fulfilled.

"Such was the beginning of a distinctively American church history. . . . We shall find that it is the history of Christianity working towards its own emancipation from secular power; and that it is at the same time the history of the state learning slowly, but at last effectually, that it has no jurisdiction in the sphere of religion, and that its equal duty to all churches is the duty, not of enforcing their censures, but only of protecting their peaceable worship and their liberty of prophesying."*

These first signs of unity and co-operation among the Puritans and Pilgrims were prophetic of greater signs, of facts and events that would prove beyond any doubt that the principles of the Genevan Reformer had found lodgment in Puritan and Pilgrim circles alike, in fact, controlled the entire life. What happened in 1629 was like the acorn—a gigantic oak was to sprout from it. The world today knows that oak as the United States of America. It is, indeed, highly interesting, to trace this process of union, a process ever widening, until it spanned the continent. "American history is the record of a continuous process of union. Distant settlements were brought together under larger colonial jurisdictions. From time to time colonies joined one another in leagues. At last the thirteen colonies combined under a single independent government."†

We do not claim that this process of union was due

*Leonard Bacon, Genesis of the N. E. Churches, ps. 477, 478.

†George Park Fisher, The Colonial Era, p. 133.

to Calvinism as such; other forms of Christianity there are that place the ideal of unity before them. Any organization, no matter what its character or quality may be, does so. In unity there is strength. But what we do claim is, in the first place, that a perfect concord existed between our fathers so far as the essential principles of Calvinism are concerned, and that it was this existing concord which led to their spiritual, ecclesiastical, and afterwards political union. Had this concord been wanting, there never would have been union of any sort. And in the second place we wish to point to the fact, that in no other system of thought the unity of believers is such an *essential* point as in the Calvinistic system. No other system has such a lofty conception of that unity. And so the fact, that it was the Calvinistic, and no other form of religion which our fathers clung to, was of itself of the greatest significance. It hastened the process of union. It made the union more profound and more durable.

THE NATION-BUILDERS AT WORK

CHAPTER V.

THE NATION-BUILDERS AT WORK

1. Churchlife

SINCE religion was the predominant factor in the life of the early New Englanders, and since religion finds its embodiment first of all in the institutions which we call churches, it may not be amiss to consider whether these churches were, in fact, Calvinistic, not only in doctrine, but also in the matter of church polity. So far as the very earliest of colonial churches are concerned, we have already seen that they may justly be termed "Calvinistic." Only in matters of church government did they deviate, in part at least, from the "Calvinistic" churches on the European continent. But did this Calvinism continue its hold upon the churches? What about the first century of colonial life in this respect?

We think we are making a safe statement when we claim, not only with regard to the churches, but to the other spheres of life as well, that the entire seventeenth century represents the Calvinistic age in our American history, that all things during these many decades were controlled by the spirit of that great Frenchman, John Calvin. Let us adduce proof for this statement, first of all with respect to the churches.

In the year 1648 the great Westminster Assembly in England, the most "Calvinistic" church assembly that ever convened under the canopy of heaven, finished its work on the doctrinal standards of the churches. In the month of September of that very year a synod of churches assembled at Cambridge, Massachusetts, and passed *unanimously* the following resolution: "This

synod having perused and considered (with much gladness of heart and thankfulness to God) the Confession of Faith published by the late Reverend Assembly in England, do judge it to be very holy, orthodox, and judicious, in *all matters of faith,* and do therefore freely and fully consent thereunto for the substance thereof. Only in those things which have respect unto church government and discipline we refer ourselves to the Platform of Church Discipline agreed upon by the present Assembly. And we do, therefore, think it meet that this confession of faith should be commended to the churches of Christ among us, and to the honored court, as worthy of their due consideration and acceptance.''*

This resolution alone would suffice to show that our statement concerning the Calvinism of the New England churches is backed by actual facts. It endorses words like the following, written nearly a century ago by Dr. Hill,—''They (the Pilgrims and Puritans) in common with members of the Established Church in that day, were *honest Calvinists,* according to the plain and obvious meaning of the Articles of said Church. . . . As to doctrine, the churches of the first settlers in New England were entirely orthodox, judging the meaning of that term from the Confessions of the Reformed Churches on the continent of Europe, the Articles of the Church of England, under which they had been raised, and even the Westminster Confession of Faith . . .''†

Only two years before the above-given resolution was passed the General Court of Massachusetts called for a synod of the churches, employing in its Introduction to the summons the following words,—''. . . that ye Lord being thus acknowledged by church & state to be our Judge, our Lawgiver, & our King, he may be gra-

*William Hill, D. D., American Presbyterianism, p. 22.
†Idem, ps. 19, 22.

ciously pleased still to save us, as hitherto hee hath done, & glory may still dwell in our land, truth & peace may abide still in these churches & plantations, & our posterity may not so easily decline from ye good way, when they shall receive the same thus publikely & solemely comended to them, but may rather ad to such beginings of reformation & purity as wee in our times have endeavored after, & so ye churches in Newe England may be Jehovahs, & hee may be to us a God from genration to genration.''*

We ask, Who among our readers has ever come across a document, more pious, more lofty, more Calvinistic in its wording? God is confessed to be the absolutely Sovereign One. The covenant-idea is most beautifully expressed. The progressive character of Calvinism is strongly evinced.

New England at this time harbored some of the greatest Calvinistic theologians, men that were bent on maintaining and preserving the faith of the fathers. We have already made mention of some of them. Even such a scholarly Puritan as William Ames, or Amesius, found his way to New England. He was one of the greatest theologians of his time. In his anti-Arminian controversies he shone like a bright star. While the synod of Dort was in session the States of Holland gave him a pension so as to enable him to settle at Dort and to assist the president of that synod, the Reverend Johannes Bogerman. While professor at the Academy of Franeker, province of Friesland, in the Netherlands, he wrote his Medulla Theologica and his De Conscientia, the former a dogmatical, the latter an ethical work, and especially in the field of ethics Ames was soon known as an expert authority. This same man in later years

*Shurtleff, Records of the Governor and Comp. of Mass. Bay in N. E., vl. II, p. 156.

wended his way to the shores of New England, and aided the churches there. These hardy New England men seem to have been bent on getting the most illustrious men in the theological world. The great Owen was also called by them, to become pastor of a church in Boston, and he accepted. Only some very speedy action on the part of the English king, who did not wish to see his kingdom depleted of the best theological thinkers, prevented Dr. Owen's sailing. It will readily be understood how such master minds as of Cotton, Hooker, Davenport, Ames, and others, exerted a profound influence upon New England theology and kept it in the straight track of orthodoxy.

"The full declaration of Puritan doctrine did not appear until the adoption of the Cambridge Platform, in 1651. But essentially its declarations had been the belief of the colonists from the first. The Pilgrims were Protestants of the Reformed or Calvinistic type. They got their first lessons in systematic theology from John Robinson, who had defended the decrees of the Synod of Dort against the Arminians. John Cotton early in the settlement prepared a catechism to which John Calvin could hardly have added anything of theological severity. The church in Salem adopted a covenant which reads as follows: 'We covenant with the Lord and one with another and do bind ourselves in the presence of God to walk together according as He is pleased to reveal Himself to us in His blessed word of Truth.' So when the time came for the colonists to take up their theology systematically, it was natural and easy for them to propound an only slightly modified form of the Westminster Confession of Faith."*

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*Chas. L. Thompson, Rel. Foundations of America, ps. 145, 146.

In the matter of church polity the early New England churches, and also those of the latter part of the seventeenth century, were in the main Calvinistic. We stress this point because of the tremendous influence which the church government of our fathers has exerted upon their government in the state, as will be seen anon.

In the main, we said, the New England church polity was Calvinistic. Governor Bradford himself claimed that the Pilgrims held to the discipline of the French and Dutch Reformed churches. No modern author ought to have the audacity to contradict the Pilgrim governor in this respect. Edward Johnson, one of the stalwart Puritans of early colonial times, tells his contemporaries and fellow-churchmembers, "Let the matter and forme of your Churches be such as were in the Primitive Times (before Antichrists Kingdome prevailed) plainly poynted out by Christ and his Apostles, in most of their Epistles to be neither Nationall nor Provinciall, but gathered together in Covenant of such a number as might ordinarily meete together in one place, and built of such living stones as outwardly appeare Saints by calling. You are also to ordaine Elders in every Church, make you use of such as Christ hath indued with the best gifts for that end, their call to Office shall be mediate from you, but their authority and commission shall be immediate from Christ revealed in his Word."* The churches listened to the advice of Mr. Johnson.

Coming to the question of the interrelation between the different New England congregations, a mistaken impression must be taken away, if possible. It concerns the conception that many modern authors have of the difference between the Congregational and the Presby-

*Ed. Johnson, Wonder-working Providence, Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll., Ser. 2, vl. II, p. 53.

terian church systems. Many writers would have us believe that only the Congregational churches practice a real democracy, while the Presbyterians, with their sessions, synods, and assemblies, still permit the one church or group of churches to lord it over the other. Nothing could be farther from the truth. We do not speak of the churches as they exist *now*. We speak of Congregationalism and Presbyterianism in the *historical* sense of these terms. And then it is perfectly clear to anyone that is at all acquainted with church polity that the Presbyterians mean democracy in church government, as well as the Congregationalists do. The Presbyterians, speaking strictly, have no "judicatories." Their larger conferences have no power of jurisdiction over the smaller bodies. All that the larger bodies do is to *advise* the smaller (not "lesser") bodies, and to this advice the congregations have agreed to hold themselves. Following the advice of the larger bodies is the condition for any congregation upon which it can remain with the existing Presbyterian denominations. If a congregation decides not to follow the advice of the larger bodies, such a congregation thereby withdraws itself from the confederation, but does not lose in this way its congregational character,—that is, it remains a church of Jesus Christ. The essential difference between the Congregational and Presbyterian systems is *not*, that the former makes the congregation the supreme body, and the latter subjects the congregation to the supremacy of other church bodies, but it is this: The Congregationalists maintain a strict independence among the individual churches, allowing only a sort of "conference" for the purpose of aiding and enlightening each other, while the Presbyterians believe that the *spiritual unity* of the churches of Christ should reveal itself also

in an "institutional" unity, in a well-ordained organization. In both, the Congregational and Presbyterian systems, only Christ is King. "One is your master, and ye are all brethren." As Dr. Kuyper expresses it, "All being equal under Him, there can be no distinctions of rank among believers; there are only ministers, who serve, lead, and regulate; a thoroughly Presbyterian form of government; the Church power descending directly from Christ Himself, into the congregation, concentrated from the congregation in the ministers, and by them being administered unto the brethren. So the sovereignty of Christ remains absolutely monarchical, but the government of the Church on earth becomes democratic to its bones and marrow; a system leading logically to this other sequence, that all believers and all congregations being of an equal standing, no Church may exercise any dominion over another, but that all local churches are of equal rank, and as manifestations of one and the same body, can only be united synodically, i. e., by way of confederation."*

As a matter of fact, the colonists, when they first set their feet on New England soil, established an Independent church.† They could not do otherwise. "When they landed they were not a church; whether called Separatists or Puritans, they had no church. That was left behind in England. They were a band of helpless people on an unfriendly shore. They started anew like the apostolic Church. Necessarily for the time being they were an independent church, making their own laws, settling their own forms. They had no one with whom to consult; still less any earthly

*Dr. A. Kuyper, Calvinism, p. 77.

†The colonists, however, never were *radical* Independents. They always recognized office-bearers in the church, with power to rule.

power to which they were responsible. So at first the two churches—the one at Plymouth and the one at Salem —were independent, or, as we would say, congregational churches.''*

We have already seen in a former chapter, however, that Pilgrims and Puritans sought closer connection one with another, partly for the purpose of gaining strength and insuring growth,—chiefly because of the essential principle of the unity, the *spiritual unity,* of the believers. Consequently the ecclesiastical situation in New England took a turn. The churches were drawn towards each other. In addition it must be stated that many of those that landed on the New England shores had imbibed Cartwright's ideas of church government, that is, they were Presbyterians, and they did not fail to exert influence upon the rest. Before long a peculiar kind of church organization existed in the colonies. ''Thus was the church organized—in part on the Presbyterian model of church government, in part on the principle of independence. . . . This accommodation of worship, by which Presbyterianism and Congregationalism had acknowledged elements in the colonial church, continued for a long time.''†

By the Council at Cambridge, held in the middle of the seventeenth century, a platform of church government was adopted ''which Dr. Dexter has well designated as a 'Congregationalized Presbyterianism or Presbyterianized Congregationalism.' . . . As the years went on 'The New England Way' tended increasingly toward the independent church, holding its creed with varying degrees of stringency and developing more and more into that Congregationalism which has become the

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*Chas. L. Thompson, Rel. Found. of Am., ps. 137, 138.
†Idem, p. 128.

inheritance of New England people wherever scattered abroad.''*

Doyle expresses the same thought in the following words: ''Looked at spiritually, for purposes of worship and of religious teaching, each church was an independent body of believers. But in all questions of government, even in those which decided the admission or exclusion of members, the churches were bound together as a confederation. . . . No New England church ever made a claim of absolute independence.''† In the Historical Preface to the Cambridge Platform it was clearly stated that, ''It belongeth unto synods and councils, to debate and determine controversies of faith, and cases of conscience, to clear up from the Word directions for the worship of God, and for the good government of the church, to bear witness against mal-administration and corruption in doctrine or manners, in any particular church, and to give directions for the reformation thereof.''

The New England churches maintained their doctrine and form of government for many decades—the decades in which the foundations of this great republic were built. Mr. Bacon, although admitting that at the end of the seventeenth century signs of an approaching change were in evidence, says, ''The traditions of the fathers of New England had been piously cherished down to (the) third and fourth generation, . . . the framework both of church and of state was wonderfully little decayed or impaired. The same simplicity in the outward order of worship was maintained; the same form of high Calvinistic (why ''high''?) theology

*Chas. L. Thompson, Rel. Found. of Am., ps. 146, 147.
†J. A. Doyle, Engl. Cols. in Am., vl. III, ps. 66, 67.

continued to be cherished as a norm of sound preaching and as a vehicle of instruction to children.''*

The religious situation of about the year 1700 has been tersely described by Prof. Fisher in the following words: ''In the closing part of the seventeenth century the Arminian theology had come to prevail widely in England, in the room of the stricter Augustinian and Calvinistic opinions which had previously held sway among both churchmen and non-conformists. A tendency to latitudinarian ways of thought in theology was rife in the first half of the eighteenth century. The same phases of opinion silently spread in New England.''†

And yet—we should not think too little of the influence of Calvinistic thought, even towards the end of the seventeenth century. That influence existed. During the eighteenth century there would come a time when Calvinism would regain, at least in part, that same influence. According to Increase Mather there existed in 1677 over eighty English churches in New England and six Indian churches. Every one of these was in doctrine Calvinistic, in government Congregational-Presbyterian. As a striking proof of the piety and orthodoxy of the New England men, as late as 1680, we would beg to submit a summons to prayer, issued by the General Court of New Plymouth, during the strenuous time when Charles II of England tried to make the colonies do his bidding. This marvellous document runs as follows:

''The Generall Court, hauing taken into theire serious consideration the great waight of those concerns now before them, as alsoe the labouring cause of God

*L. W. Bacon, Hist. of Am. Christianity, p. 103.
†George Park Fisher, The Col. Era, p. 231.

in the world, doe commend it to all churches and people of God in this collonie to sett apart the last Weddensday in Augst next as a day of solemne fasting & prayer, wherein to seeke the face & favor of God to vs & His whole people & interest throughout the Christian world, and especially that the Lord would direct in, and owne, and blesse that our vndertakeing and waighty applycation to our Sou lord the Kinge, for the preseruation, continuance, and inlargment of those good privileges and liberties, sacred and civill, that for soe longe a time wee haue had the comfortable injoyment of, that wee may find fauor in the eyes of our Kinge, as a testimony of the Lords yett graciouse owneing of vs as His couenant people in Christ, and that God may be intreated to be a wall of fier round about vs, and our glory in the middest of this His wilderness people, and still defend our glory, and that the breaches Hee hath made in any of our churches may be healed by a comfortable supply in the minnestry, and that the Protestant interest may be advanced in our English nation the world throughout; that the Kinges royall person may be preserved from all plotts & conspiracyes of Popish adversaries, and that all the Lords people may be saued in & out of trouble, & that the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ may be advanced & submitted too every where.'"*

Let it be remembered—less than one hundred years after the time when this thoroughly Calvinistic document was issued the United States of America began its course among the nations of the earth. The very grandsons of the authors of this document were to become the authors of a document of world-wide importance—the Declaration of Independence! In the course of time our studies will bring us to this later period; we

*Records of New Plymouth, vl. VI, ps. 57, 58.

shall then see, if life and strength be granted unto us, whether any real spiritual correspondence can be detected between the souls of the fathers and those of the children.

2. Politics

In our Introduction we have already briefly stated the political principles that Calvinism stands for, and in the further course of our study these same principles have come to the fore time and again. It is not our intention to repeat what has already been stated. Only a few things do we wish to mention in connection with the political principles of the Calvinistic system, either by way of a reminder or to introduce them for the first time, in the present connection.

The Calvinist holds as a "primordial truth," that God has instituted governments because of *sin.* "Every State-formation, every assertion of the power of the magistrate, every mechanical means of compelling order and of guaranteeing a safe course of life is therefore always something unnatural; something against which the deeper aspirations of our nature rebel; and which, on this very account, may become the source both of a dreadful abuse of power on the part of those who exercise it, and of a contumacious revolt on the part of the multitude."* Realizing this fact, that a government, though God-ordained, is yet *unnatural* and *extraordinary,* so far as God's original world-order is concerned, and therefore liable to run into excesses of various kind, the Calvinist consults the constitution of the Supreme Lawgiver, the Author of governments, to find out in which relation he himself stands to these governments and which course they are expected to follow. Only

*Chas. L. Thompson, Rel. Found. of Am., ps. 146, 147.

by doing this is the Calvinist assured for himself, that governments are measured according to the right standard. Only by doing this does he know whether a government meets the ends for which it was instituted, namely the protection and safety of mankind.

Calvinism is nothing but Biblicism. If a government acts in accordance with the Bible, it will always be doing the right thing. If it transgresses the bounds that the Bible has placed around it, it becomes tyrannical. The New England governments, taken on the whole, were so exemplary because they were—not theocracies, but *Biblical* governments. The men of which these governments were composed recognized the Author of governments and of governmental authority, and they at least *tried*, tried hard, to govern in accordance with the faith of their souls, and to serve only those ends which the Bible placed before them. They have made mistakes. We shall speak of them anon. But their plans were right. And in most cases these plans were realized.

Our New England fathers were men of the truly democratic stamp, and they were true democrates because they believed in God as the absolutely Sovereign One, besides whom there were no sovereigns whatsoever. They did not believe in *popular sovereignty,* "as it has been anti-theistically proclaimed at Paris in 1789," nor in *state-sovereignty,* "as it has of late been developed by the historico-pantheistic school of Germany," but they did believe in *divine sovereignty,* and with all their soul. At the bottom of "An Abstract of the Lawes of New England," published in London, in 1641, the writer found these words, taken from the prophecies of Isaiah: "The Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Lawgiver, the Lord is our King, He will save us." That was the favorite text of the regular New England "politician"! Such "politicians"

the people honored and respected! Says Fisher, "The idea entertained of the divine origin of government and of the sanctions of law secured to the rulers, although chosen by the people, popular reverence."*

From the principle of the absolute sovereignty of God our fathers deduced the principles of the natural equality of mankind and of civil and religious liberty. John Quincy Adams, the sixth president of the United States, in discussing the religious source of American fundamentals, calls the natural equality of mankind the foundation of the American Union, and civil and religious liberty the two pillars resting upon this foundation. And then Mr. Adams, who was "scrupulously honest," and whose "straightforwardness amounted to bluntness," goes on to say, "For this foundation, the natural equality of mankind,—and for these two pillars, civil and religious liberty,—the North American Union, to whatever extent of dominion and whatever succession of ages destined to endure, will be forever indebted to the Puritan fathers of New England."† This doctrine of the equality of mankind, says Mr. Adams, the Puritans and Pilgrims imbibed from the sacred fountain of the Scriptures; it was taught in the history of Creation, and formed the foundation of the religion of Jesus.

When the Calvinists came in New England they had almost a free hand in the organization of their governments. The New Plymouth colony was, in fact, altogether free. It had no charter from the king; only his royal permission to establish itself in America. Nothing whatsoever had been prescribed by the English government. The Massachusetts Bay Colony had a royal

*George Park Fisher The Col. Era, p. 171.

†John Q. Adams, The New England Confederacy of 1643, Mass. Hist. Coll., 3d Ser., vl. IX, p. 223.

charter, but this charter had been drawn up so loosely and contained so few limitations, that also among the Puritans an almost perfect freedom existed in governmental affairs. "Omit the word Company (from the Charter) and we have the constitution of an independent state with very ill-defined powers."*

The immigrants made perfect use of this freedom. They founded governments which were in accord with their principles. Nothing of the kind had ever been possible in Europe. About their conception of the relation of church and state we have already written in a foregoing chapter, and we only remind the reader of the fact that the Calvinists have always, without exception, proclaimed the *essential* difference between the two. Only so far as the bearing of the one to the other is concerned have the Calvinists at times entertained faulty ideas. In the course of time, however, the principle of the absolute distinction of church and state worked through, like a leaven, and the faulty relationship was gradually adjusted.

The principle of freedom of conscience or personal liberty fared the same way. From the root-principle of the absolute sovereignty of God must also, necessarily, be deduced the principle of freedom of conscience. Governments have but a limited power. They have so much power as has been delegated unto them by God. The Word of God clearly indicates the limits of governmental authority, and it clearly teaches that there are many spheres in the life of mankind which lie outside of the realm of the government. One of these spheres is that of conscience. There is a deduced sovereignty of conscience, as well as a deduced sovereignty of the government, of society, and of the Church. "Conscience is never

*Henry Cabot Lodge, Hist. of the Engl. Col. in Am., Rev. Ed., p. 343.

subject to man, but always and ever to God Almighty.'' It is the business of the government to see to it that the one sovereign sphere does not intrude upon the premises of the other. That means that also the government itself should be wary of not trampling upon the rights of conscience. Freedom, personal freedom, should live forever,—should raise its banner, all unfurled,—even in the fiercest squalls,—to the high heavens, to the fiery throne of its omnipotent Father!

Our New England Calvinists knew all these truths, and they had lived them in part. *In part,* we say,—for what they desired with all their might for themselves and had actually obtained, they were loath to give to others. The Calvinists in the Netherlands had lived these glorious truths *in toto.* Hence the more advanced position that the Pilgrims and Thomas Hooker and Roger Williams occupied,—men that had either lived in Holland or had studied its Calvinistic literature. But the Massachusetts men, though bearing in their souls and minds the noble and lofty ideals which we have indicated, found it a thing exceedingly hard to shake off the trammels of usage and tradition. In the course of time, however, also this principle worked through, like a leaven: (is not this the peculiar characteristic of any principle, loyally entertained?), and freedom of conscience, true personal liberty, was both recognized and practiced in every nook of the land. Liberty of speech, liberty of the press, and liberty of worship, could not but follow in the very wake of this blessing.

To say that all these liberties could not be the result of Calvinism because not all of the early New England Calvinists practiced them, is surely the height of folly. Anyone that will make a statement of that kind displays a pitiable lack of historic insight. Let us, in this connection, introduce to the reader once more

that venerable old statesman of the Netherlands, Dr. A. Kuyper, a man of genius and unwonted ken. Upon his visit to this country, some twenty years ago, he spoke to an eastern audience concerning this question, of the early Calvinists not practicing the Calvinistic theory of freedom in the state, in the church, and in the sphere of the conscience. A part of his words we have quoted in another connection. Another part follows:

"... We must see and acknowledge that this system of bringing differences in religious matters under the criminal jurisdiction of the government, resulted directly from the conviction that the Church of Christ on earth could express itself only in *one* form and as *one* institution. This *one* church alone, in the Middle Ages, was the Church of Christ, and everything which differed from her was looked upon as inimical to this one true church. The government, therefore, was not called upon to judge, or to weigh or to decide for itself. There *was* only one Church of Christ on earth, and it was the task of the Magistrate to protect that church from schisms, heresies, and sects.

"But break that one church into fragments, admit that the Church of Christ can reveal itself in many forms, in different countries; nay even in the same country, in a multiplicity of institutions; and immediately everything which was deduced from this unity of the visible church drops out of sight. And therefore, if it cannot be denied that Calvinism itself *has* ruptured the unity of the church, and that in Calvinistic countries a rich variety of all manner of church-formations revealed itself, then it follows that we must not seek the true Calvinistic characteristic in what, for a time, it has retained of the old system, but rather in that, which, new and fresh, has sprung up from its own root.

"Results have shown that, even after the lapse of

three centuries, in all distinctively Roman Catholic countries, even in the South American Republics, the Roman Catholic church is and remains the State-church, precisely as does the Lutheran church in Lutheran countries. And the free churches have exclusively flourished in those countries which were touched by the breath of Calvinism, i. e., in Switzerland, the Netherlands, England, Scotland, and the United States of America.

"In Roman Catholic countries the identification of the invisible and the visible church, under Papal unity, is still maintained. In Lutheran countries, with the aid of 'cuius regio eius religio', the Court-confession has been monstrously imposed on the people as the land-confession; there the Reformed were treated harshly, they were exiled and outraged as enemies of Christ. In the Calvinistic Netherlands, on the contrary, all those who were persecuted for religion's sake, found a harbor of refuge. There the Jews were hospitably received; there the Lutherans were in honor; there the Mennonites flourished; and even the Arminians and Roman Catholics were permitted the free exercise of their religion at home and in secluded churches. The Independents, driven from England, have found a resting place in the Calvinistic Netherlands; and from this same country the Mayflower sailed forth to transport the Pilgrim Fathers to their new fatherland.

"I do not build, therefore, on subterfuge, but I appeal to clear historical facts. And here I repeat—the underlying characteristic of Calvinism must be sought, not in what it has adopted from the past, but in what it has newly created. It is remarkable, in this connection, that from the very beginning our Calvinistic theologians and jurists have defended liberty of conscience against the Inquisition. Rome perceived very clearly how liberty of conscience must loosen the foundations of the

unity of the visible church, and therefore she opposed it. But on the other hand it must be admitted that Calvinism, by praising aloud liberty of conscience has in principle abandoned every absolute characteristic of the visible church. . . . Here lies the solution of the problem: With Rome the system of persecution issued from the identification of the visible with the invisible church, and from *this* dangerous line Calvin departed. But what he still persevered in defending was the identification of his Confession of the Truth with the absolute Truth itself, and it only wanted fuller experience to realize that also this proposition, true as it must ever remain in our personal conviction, may never be imposed by force upon other people.''*

As has been remarked, in the colony of Plymouth freedom of conscience was more in evidence than in the Bay colony. We have given the reason for this phenomenon. Gradually the colonists began to realize, especially at Plymouth, but in later years also in Massachusetts, that their practices were not in harmony with their principles and the former were changed step by step. There was nothing in outward life that coerced the colonists to change their practices; the change was the logical and inevitable consequence of the lofty principles that they held dear. A striking example of how the process of liberation went on, gradually, but surely, we find in connection with a visit paid by ''His Majesties' Commissioners to New England.'' On February 22, 1664, the Commissioners proposed to the Court of New Plymouth that freedom of religious opinions be granted to all men within the limits of the colony, provided a general orthodoxy was maintained. That is, the Commissioners wanted the Court to allow immigrants to settle in Plymouth, who did not in all respects har-

*Dr. A. Kuyper, Calvinism, ps. 130, 133.

monize with the original planters. Moreover, it was proposed that even other churches should be allowed to be organized within the colony. On May 2, 1665, the Court answered as follows: "Wee cannot but acknowlidge it to bee an high fauor from God and from our Souvereign that wee may enjoy our consciences in point of Gods worship, the maine end of transplanting ourselues into these remote corners of the earth . . . but if through different pswasions respecting church goument, it cannot bee obtained (viz., to remain in *one* church) wee would not deney a liberty vnto any, according to the proposition, that are truly consciencious, although differing from us . . . of maintaining the worship of God in two congregations."*

Writers have constantly pointed to the example of the Massachusetts Bay colony, where the political franchise was restricted to churchmembers, when they wished to indicate how intolerant our fathers were. And, truly, if we had nothing else but the information which these writers have been pleased to give us, we would hardly dare to surmise that our fathers were in any way connected with American freedom and American democracy. But, happily, we have other sources of information, original sources, which no amateur historian or wrongly impressed university professor can change or cause to be changed. And, relying on this original and authoritative testimony, let us first of all make the statement that by limiting the political rights of suffrage to members of the church (a thing which was never done in New Plymouth—thanks to Dutch influences) the Massachusetts colonists did not intend to establish a theocracy, did not purpose to establish a heaven upon earth, did not wish to treat non-churchmembers as pariahs and outcasts, did not, in a spirit of abominable selfishness,

*Records of New Plymouth, vl. IV. p. 86.

seek to withhold from others what they had gained for themselves,—but that they introduced this rule solely for the purpose of gaining the end of their plantation—to become rid of the tyrannizing power of kings and prelates. We grant, this kind of means was decidedly wrong. It was not a "Calvinistic" weapon that they employed. And for that reason it should never have been used. But the *purpose* which the Puritans had in mind when they introduced this stern measure was laudable and very well to be understood. They came here to seek freedom, freedom in every sphere of life. They had sacrificed enormously to obtain that freedom. Finally it was theirs. But here came the so-called adventurers, men that migrated from England for material gain; here came the representatives of the Anglican Church, the men that favored Charles and Laud, and that stood for their oppressive tactics;—should the New Englanders open their doors to them and thus invite practically the same danger that they had struggled so hard to escape? For, once the door having been opened, who knows but multitudes of adventurers and High Churchmen might flock to the colony, and, having the same rights of suffrage as the Puritans, might enforce upon the earlier colonists such oppressive measures as were abounding in the mother country! The Puritans, therefore, acted in self-defense, when they adopted the following rule: "To the end that the body of the commons may be preserved of honest and good men, it was ordered and agreed that for the time to come no man shall be admitted to the freedom of this body politic but such as are members of some of the churches within the limits of the same."

We readily admit, however, that the old spirit of the Middle Ages, about which we have already written extensively, was still strong with the early Puritans in New England, and made them afraid to run to the end

of their line—the complete separation of church and state. But it was not this mediæval spirit which *caused* the limitation of the political rights of suffrage. The *cause,* on the contrary, was the love for freedom. The *means employed* resulted from the remnant of mediævalism which still lingered in the brave Puritan soul. Paradoxical this sounds, it is true, but history is full of paradoxical situations.

Our fathers soon realized that the means which they used to maintain their freedom were at variance with the Calvinistic principles which they confessed. The Pilgrims gave a good example, in this respect. Thomas Hooker, as we have seen, also began an agitation in favor of Calvinistic practices. Being the founder of Connecticut, he caused the principle of complete separation of church and state to be embodied in the constitution of his colony as early as 1639. Only eight years later, in 1647, the General Court of Massachusetts ordered that those who were not members of churches might vote for selectmen and on questions of taxation and that such persons might also be chosen to fill certain offices.* In 1669 all laws in the Massachusetts colony, limiting the rights of suffrage to churchmembers and otherwise placing restrictions upon those who did not belong to the instituted church, were repealed.

Turning to the political formation of the New England colonies, and avoiding a repetition of things already mentioned in other connections, we take liberty, first of all, to point to the fact that the political centres in these colonies were the towns, and that the conferences in which the general political and civil policies were determined were the town meetings. The towns were places where groups of people had clustered about the church building. The town meetings

*Thompson, Rel. Found. of America, p. 145.

were political gatherings, where every voter had a chance to speak and act; gatherings, therefore, that were being conducted on a truly democratic scale.

Learned men of the past and present have tried hard to make us believe that the New England town and town meeting found their origin, not in the system of principles which the New Englanders held to, but in the old Germanic practice of living in towns. Dr. Herbert B. Adams, of Johns Hopkins University, wrote a studied monograph on the Germanic origin of the New England town. Professor James K. Hosmer wrote in the same vein. But, as Doyle has correctly remarked, to prove the historicity of this contention not only identity, but also historical connection is required. And this historical connection, we feel sure, is lacking absolutely. No historian has as yet been able to bridge the gulf of centuries which separates the Germanic town from that of New England. Douglas Campbell has made an attempt in that direction by claiming that the Dutch Republic was the connecting link; that the Dutch Republic obtained its institutions from its Germanic ancestors; that the Pilgrims and other men, in turn, obtained theirs from the Dutch, in whose midst they had resided. But Mr. Campbell's arguments fail to convince us on this point. He himself grants that the democratic town-system was not in existence in the provinces of Holland and Utrecht, where the American colonists had resided. And in the northern and eastern provinces of the Netherlands the "people" had very little to say in questions of government; there were elections by property owners, but no democratic, popular town meetings of any kind. We cannot here enter more deeply into Dutch conditions. Suffice it to say that in the Netherlands, as well as elsewhere, it was Calvinism that brought real liberty to the people. All reliable authori-

ties testify to this effect. But even Calvinism did not bring anything like the New England town meeting to Holland. The town, as it existed in New England, and the town meeting, were peculiar to the Puritan colonies. In no country on the globe were they found in the ages immediately preceding the Reformation. We even make bold to claim that also the ancient Germanic towns were not in every respect like those of New England. The government of these Germanic towns has never been truly democratic, as we have already tried to make plain in our first chapter.

The reason why the New England town finds no precedent anywhere in European history is, that it is the direct result of the Calvinistic system, and this Calvinistic system, we say it again, had never been given the right and full chance in the old world. Here it appeared free and untrammeled. And one of its practical results was the New England town. In the southern colonies, where Calvinism did not exist or was less virile, the town-system of politics was a thing wholly unknown.

Religion, for the Calvinist, is the all-controlling element in life. This religion, with the Calvinists, was strictly democratic in character. This democratic religion found embodiment in churches that were also democratic, both in doctrine and in government. These democratic churches gathered every Lord's day in humble meeting-houses. These meetinghouses were, each one, the nucleus of a larger or smaller group of houses. People built their homes around the church edifices. As the government in the church was, just so was the government in the state. Not merely because the church form of government was a good and laudable type, also for the state, did the Puritans organize their political governments as they actually did, but because the principles that underlay the democratic form of church government were exactly

the same as those that, according to the Calvinistic conception, should exert controlling influence in the state. In both spheres God is the absolute Sovereign. In both spheres men are born free and equal, so far as their mutual relation is concerned. In neither sphere can one man have inherent power over the other.

Now the form of church government was very simple, as we have seen. The male members of the church came together at stated times in order to elect the office-bearers. These office-bearers were then representatives of the King of the church, Jesus Christ. For the King chooses His special servants through the instrumentality of the people. This was altogether in harmony with Calvinistic principles. But this same King was Sovereign in the state, be it in another sense. And it was His divine ordinance that His representatives in the state, if it be at all possible, be elected in exactly the same way as His church representatives. The same principles necessarily called for the same methods. And hence the New England town, like a political congregation. And hence the town meeting, like an ordinary congregation meeting, where elections were held and each member could have his say.

And how far-reaching the results of this Calvinistic system! Says Bryce, "Each (New England community) was a religious as well as a civil body politic, gathered round the church as its centre; and the equality which prevailed in the congregation prevailed also in civil affairs. . . . Each such settlement was called a Town or Township, . . . and though presently the towns became aggregated into counties, and the legislature and governor, first of the whole colony and, after 1776, of the State, began to exert their superior authority,—the towns . . . held their ground, and are to this day the true units of political life in New England, the solid

foundation of that well-compacted structure of self-government which European philosophers have admired and the new states of the West have sought to reproduce.''*

And George Park Fisher tells us, ''It is a characteristic feature of New England from the beginning that its inhabitants dwelt together in towns. In this peculiarity, *so fruitful in its consequences, political and social,* there was a broad contrast with the Virginia settlements.''†

Says Hindsdale, ''The influence of local self-government upon New England life was very great. It proved an excellent training school in the science and the art of politics. Samuel Adams, who had more to do with preparing the public mind of Massachusetts for the Revolution than any other one man, has been called the man of the town meeting.''‡

And, to mention no more, De Tocqueville asserts, very significantly, ''*The republic was already established in every township.*''¶

We have purposely cited authorities here. We might be accused of exaggeration. Has then Calvinism really done so much for America? We beg leave to let the reader judge for himself. Our mind is settled on this question.

Perhaps some would feel like making a remark at this point. They might say that we have instances of the New England men wishing to go farther than Calvin himself in matters of civil polity. And they are right. Some of the Puritans, John Eliot f. i., actually believed that the Mosaic system of civil government ought to be

*Bryce, American Commonwealth, vl. I, p. 562.
†Fisher, The Colonial Era, p. 99.
‡Hinsdale, The American Government, p. 39.
¶De Tocqueville, Democracy in America, p. 40.

adopted from beginning to end, and that it was the will of God that this should be done. But—and we claim it with emphasis—such Puritans were *exceptions* to the rule. A man like the Rev. Eliot, who tells the readers of his Christian Commonwealth in one place that God wants them to copy the Mosaic form of government, because that was the ideal form, ordered by God Himself, seems to feel the incorrectness of his advice in another connection and then, in true Calvinistic fashion, informs his readers that we find the *essentials* of civil polity in the Word of God, and that for that reason our laws must be deduced from it. The Bible is the Magna Charta, and "no Law, Statute, or Judgement is valid, further than it appeareth to arise and flow from the Word of God."* Gradually the number of those, who wished the civil law of the Israelites to be maintained in every detail, lessened, and finally they disappeared altogether. They had simply been a misguided company of men, who did not distinguish between form and essence. The law of action and reaction, with regard to Romanism in this case, had carried them into excesses. Puritanism as such had nothing to do with this minor movement.

Of the New England colonies Connecticut was the first to adopt a written constitution. The Calvinist Hooker, founder of the colony, naturally saw to it—and the citizens helped him along with enthusiasm—that all the principles of freedom and democracy which he had studied in Calvin, Beza, and others, and which he had learned to know from practice during his stay in Holland, were embodied in this document. It was the first truly Calvinistic constitution written. It prescribed a government of the people, for the people, and by the people—but *under God.* Concerning this great

*Mass. Hist. Coll. 3d Ser., vl. IX, p. 144.

document Fiske says, "It was the first written constitution known to history that created a government, and it marked the beginnings of American democracy, of which Thomas Hooker deserves more than any other man to be called the father. The government of the United States today is in lineal descent more nearly related to that of Connecticut than to that of any of the other thirteen colonies."* The only allegiance this constitution exacts is to "the government of the jurisdiction of Connecticut." It has been truly said—Connecticut was already an independent republic. The suffrage was extended to all who had been admitted inhabitants of the different towns, and had taken the oath of fidelity. A system of representation was introduced which prevented the larger towns from exercising undue jurisdiction over the smaller. Representative democracy, the outgrowth of the Calvinistic system, had been officially and permanently established.

We should not forget, in considering the political formation of the New England colonies, that the Calvinistic Netherlands have been of exceedingly great importance for the Puritans. Douglas Campbell, in his admirable work on the Puritans, has stressed this point like no writer before or after him. At times, we believe, Mr. Campbell was too onesided in his representations. He slighted the Calvinistic element in England altogether. But that the Netherlands have had much to do with early political organizations in America, is beyond doubt. In former chapters we have had opportunity to discuss the Dutch Calvinistic influence upon England in pre-Reformation and Reformation times. Campbell surely did *not* exaggerate when he told his readers that the New England "planters" came from English districts which had been under a strong Dutch influence

*John Fiske, Beginnings of New England, p. 127.

for three quarters of a century. Besides, many of the most prominent immigrants had been in contact with Holland and Holland conditions. Roger Williams, the founder of Rhode Island, knew the Dutch language and was acquainted with the things Calvinism had brought about in the country of rivers and dikes. John Davenport, the founder of the New Haven colony, lived in Holland from 1633 to 1636. Thomas Hooker, the founder of the Connecticut colony, also lived in Holland for three years, from 1630 to 1633. John Mason, who freed Connecticut from the Pequod Indians, had served in the army of the Dutch republic. Lion Gardener, another leading colonist, had been engineer in the army of the Prince of Orange, in Holland. This list could be continued. And all these men were in Holland when Calvinism there was at its zenith, when the old Beggar spirit had permeated every sphere of national life and had given rise and shape to religious, civil, and social institutions of different kind. The colonists, in their writings, often made reference to the practice of the Low Countries, and in still more instances copied Dutch methods and institutions without further ado. We only remind the reader of voting by ballot, the peculiar system of representation in Connecticut, and afterwards in other localities, the limited power of the governing head in the declaration of war and the conclusion of peace, the written constitutions, the freedom of the press, and many other things which were direct copies from Dutch originals. And these Dutch originals were the results of Calvinism.

It is a very evident truth, a truth which, so far as we know, has never been denied by any historian, that the various colonial groups in New England were controlled by one spirit, were actuated by one specific set of principles. If careful study is made of early New England one

will detect that, in the last analysis, not a *set of principles,* but only *one fundamental principle* furnished the motive power in all the doings of our fathers. There were boundary lines between the different colonies. The one colony was more tolerant than the other. The one group of colonists held more rigidly to this method, another to that mode of action. But essentially all were one, one and indivisible. What was that *one* spirit and that *one* principle? Shall we answer, The spirit of freedom and the principle of equality? But does that carry us back far enough? Have these abstractions their origin in themselves? They surely have not! No, but it was the spirit of Calvinism which controlled our ancestors, and it was the glorious principle of the absolute sovereignty of God which, cogently and irresistibly, made itself felt in the various departments of life.

It was this essential unity in the thought-system of the colonists which made possible that outward form of unity, known to us as the Confederacy of 1643. The immediate causes of the union were the danger from the side of the Indians and the necessity of presenting a united front to the mother country. The four colonies united in this Confederacy were Massachusetts, Plymouth, Connecticut, and New Haven. John Quincy Adams, in his splendid paper on the Confederacy of 1643, informs us that, "The New England Confederacy originated in the Plymouth colony, and (that it) was probably suggested to them by the example which they had witnessed, and under which they had lived several years, in the United Netherlands." And Mr. Adams adds to this in another connection, "*The New England confederacy of 1643 was the model and prototype of the North American confederacy of 1774.*"*

*John Q. Adams, The N. E. Conf. of 1643, in Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll., 3d Ser., vl. IX, ps. 211, 219.

The spirit and intention of the men that headed this union is very evident from the sources. An extract from the original minutes of the meeting of the Commissioners of the United Colonies of New England, held at New Haven, September, 1646, reads as follows: "If thus we be in all things for God hee will certainelie be wth vs. And though the God of this world (as hee is stiled) be worshipped and by vsurpacion sett vp his throne in the maine and greatest pte of America, yet this small pte and porcion may be vindicated as by the right hand of Jehouah, and iustlie called Emanuels land." In this same meeting it was decided that, "Whereas our good God hath from the first done great things for his people in these colonies in sundry respects worthy to be written in our hearts with a deepe & charected impression not to be blotted out & forgotten & to be transmitted to posterity, that they may know the Lord, & how He hath glorifyed His grace & mercy in our foundations & beginnings, that they also may trust in Him, & walke with a right foote before Him without warping and declining,—It is desired by the Commissioners, that all the colonies . . . would collect & gather up the many speciall providences of God towards them, since their arrival & settling in these parts, how He hath made roome for them, how His hand hath bene with them in laying their foundations in church & commonwealth . . . & that memorialls beinge made they may be duly, communicated & seriously considered, that no thinge be mistaken, but that history may be compiled according to truth, with due weight, by some able & fitt man appointed therevnto." *

In how far the wishes of the Commissioners were complied with we have not been able to find out. That some-

*Pulsifer, Acts of the Commissioners, vl. I, front page and ps. 82, 83.

thing along this line has been accomplished is a matter of certainty. Our fathers saw before them a great future. As we have stated before, they had as it were the prophet's spirit within them, and felt that great things were about to develop out of their heroic efforts.

The purpose of the union is tersely described in the Introduction to the Articles of Confederation of the United Colonies of New England: "Whereas, wee all came into these parts of America wth one and the same end and aim, namely to advaunce the Kingdome of or Lord Jesus Christ and to enjoy the liberties of the Gospell in puritie wth peace, And whereas in or settleinge (by wise providence of God) we are further dispersed vpon the Sea Coasts and Riuers then was at first intended . . . (follows description of danger from enemies) . . . Wee therefore doe conceiue it our bounden dutye wthout delay to enter into a present Consotiation amongst ourselues . . . That as in Nation and Religion so in other respects we bee and continue One. . . ."*

So far as the judiciary of the colonies is concerned, the New England Calvinists wavered not a minute in introducing the most democratic form of judicial procedure. At first the General Court formed the judicial body; afterwards the old English jury system was employed. Not the large proprietors alone, however, or the men high in rank and position, were sworn in, but rich and poor, scholar and farmer, all found a place in the jury box. Other particulars in the judicial system we shall not discuss. Suffice it to say that the Calvinists took over from England and Holland just those practices and regulations which best harmonized with their general views. The sense of justice was highly developed among the colonists. The strongly juridical elements

*Pulsifer, Acts of the Commissioners, vl. I, p. 3.

in the Calvinistic system of ideas and doctrines had not failed to produce an indelible impression of the holiness of right in the Puritan mind, and right was defended to the utmost, no matter how grandiose the personage involved. The God of the Puritans was the God of an unbending justice. Was not the fundamental relation between Creator and creature a relation of justice? And should not the laws of the Creator, or of the Creator's representatives, for that very reason, be maintained at all times and in the midst of all circumstances? Was it not a Biblical truism that "Righteousness exalteth a nation"?

As an evidence of the strongly religious spirit in which the New Englanders executed justice, of their punctuality and strictness, we cite, in passing, the case of a certain Thomas Bonney, who was arraigned, at a meeting of the New Plymouth General Court, held on March 3, 1645, on a count of malicious slander. Bonney confessed his guilt and signed a Confession, drawn up by the Court, and containing the following statements: ". . . .The said Thomas Bonney doth freely and humbly acknowledg, unto the glory of God and unto his owne shame, that it was his owne base heart that caused him to make that construction. . . . The said Thomas Bonney . . . doth therefore earnestly beseech the Lord to forgive him his many and great sins therein, etc., etc."*

This man Bonney had sinned against the Supreme Lawgiver, the God of an absolute holiness and righteousness, and therefore the New Plymouth Court had cited him. He was made to feel this. He was not released until he humbled himself into the dust before the majesty—not of the Court, but of God! His judges were severe, and yet not cruel. Bonney's sin had been

*Shurtleff, Records of New Plymouth, vl. II, p. 97.

committed in the realm of morals; it was an ethical misdemeanor; it was (the unquoted passages demonstrate this) rather a careless misconstruction and the propagation of the same than a wilful distribution of pure falsehood; and so he was made to feel, by the sentence passed (that of signing the confession), that he had not so much sinned against any expressed law of man, but more so against the moral laws of the Most High. Not a jail sentence, in this case, but a confession of sin! How striking! How exact!

This fine feeling for legal justice and moral righteousness has transplanted itself from the fathers upon the children. Or else, whence that remarkable yearning after justice, in the true American soul? Whence the determination with which the absolute superiority of right over might is claimed and vindicated? Whence that strong call for fair play and a square deal, typical American terms as they are?

On the whole the English kings were rather tolerant with the New England colonists, although some instances have been recorded, in the seventeenth century, of royal interference. One of the prime reasons why the kings left so much freedom to the colonists was, that the New England Calvinists were, in a true brotherly spirit, aided by the Calvinists that had remained in the mother country, some of whom were high in station. Dr. Egerton Ryerson, a man hostile to Puritanism, makes the significant statement that Charles II (1660-1685) was very tolerant and patient with the Massachusetts colonists and granted them as much as he did "under the guidance of his Puritan Councillors."*

Of the five kings that occupied the British throne during the seventeenth century the last one, William of Orange, has been of the greatest benefit by far to the

*Ryerson, The Loyalists of America and Their Times, vl. I, p. 178.

American colonists. Of these five kings, too, he was the only real Calvinist. So far as his Calvinism is concerned, it may freely be stated that of all the princes of the House of Orange he was the greatest and strongest. And when we say this we do not even make an exception for such a wellknown figure as William the Silent, the great deliverer of the Netherlands from Spain. King William of England, who was Stadhouder William III of the Netherlands, was, like all Calvinists, "a fanatic for liberty." Macaulay regards him as having been England's greatest king. Dr. De Vries says of him, "He was the greatest king that ever sat on the English throne." Neal calls him, "the glorious deliverer of these kingdoms from popery and slavery."

A few years before William took upon himself English regal authority the last grand struggle between freedom-loving Protestantism and the Roman Catholic world-power had been waged. Louis XIV of France had represented the latter; Stadhouder William the former. This struggle "between French Catholicism and English-Dutch Protestantism, that European world-struggle for the freedom of Protestantism, was decided by William the Third, and *that decision has been of incomparable consequence for America.* After William III had decided this struggle in Europe, it was to be fought out here in America as well." French Catholicism had a strong hold upon the American continent; it had gradually surrounded the Puritan colonies on every side and threatened them with subjection. The battle was fought—fought between youthful, hopeful, courageous colonies and a power whose locks had been shorn off in the grand European struggle and whose brawny arms now hung down, palsied,—and the colonies won out. The Calvinist William III had made possible the American victory of his fellow-Calvinists. We say,

The *Calvinist* William III; for truly, it was the Calvinism within the prince's breast which gave him that rocky strength of character, that almost superhuman courage, that faith, wonderful faith, before which the greatest monarch of the times had to bend. For while William's enemies "disposed of the best trained armies of Europe, he himself had hardly any army in the beginning, all the fortresses of the country were neglected, his best admirals were quarreling one against the other, his people were disheartened." Surely, the odds were against him. And yet he conquered. He saved freedom in Europe and America. With a body, weak and sickly, he accomplished marvellous things. He did so because he believed himself to have been called by God to become the savior of freedom; he believed himself to be the actual representative of the Most High, defending His sovereignty and the liberties of mankind. When only a child one of his teachers had found him praying to his Master, that he be allowed to accomplish all these things. Humanly speaking we can freely and unreservedly state, that if William III had not put forth his tremendous efforts, the United States of America would never have seen the light of day, freedom would have perished, and we would have become what the exclusively Catholic countries of South America are at the present day. It is hard, with regard to our Catholic brethren, to say these things, and yet—truth must prevail! And so we may claim that Calvinism has not only given birth to our freedom and democracy, but has also in a large measure been instrumental in preserving the same.

King William, however, has done something in a more direct manner for the American colonies. We shall let such an authority as Bryce state the case: "In 1691, the (Massachusetts) Charter of 1628 having been declared forfeited in 1684 (by King Charles II), a new

one was granted by King William and Queen Mary, and this instrument, while it retains much of the language and some of the character of the trade guild charter, is really a political frame of government for a colony. . . .This is a true political Constitution. Under it the colony was governed, and in the main well and wisely governed, till 1780. Much of it, not merely its terms, such as the name General Court, but its solid framework, was transferred bodily to the Massachusetts Constitution of 1780, which is now in force, and which *profoundly influenced* the Convention that prepared the Federal Constitution in 1787.''*

At the close of the seventeenth century many of the less favorable features of colonial rule and early colonial times, such as intolerance in matters of religion, the incorrect relations between church and state, the prosecution and burning of so-called witches,—were already lacking entirely. Many of these faults among the Puritans we have already accounted for. They did not belong to Calvinism as such. They were unhappy excrescences, and can be easily explained historically.

Conditions at the end of the first century of colonial life were of such kind that, had our immortal Lincoln lived at that time, he could with the same degree of force and determination have uttered those thrilling words, given to the world a full century and a half later,—''That government of the people, for the people, and by the people, shall not perish from the earth!''

3. Social Life

In the different social spheres, that of the family, of business, of science, of art, and so forth, Calvinism also unflinchingly maintains the absolute sovereignty of God, and this fundamental principle has displayed its actual

*Bryce, The American Commonwealth, vl. I, p. 414.

force in the American colonies from the earliest time on. "Calvinism protests against State-omnipotence; against the horrible conception that no right exists above and beyond existing laws; and against the pride of absolutism, which recognizes no constitutional rights, except as the result of princely favor. These three representations, which find so dangerous a nourishment in the ascendency of Pantheism, are death to our civil liberties. And Calvinism is to be praised for having built a dam across this absolutistic stream, not by appealing to popular force, nor to the hallucination of human greatness, but by deducing those rights and liberties of social life from the same source, from which the high authority of the government flows—even the absolute sovereignty of God."*

Social spheres also have "sovereignty," a deduced sovereignty, within themselves. This sovereignty, according to the Calvinist, must be respected, even by the state. God has made society sovereign in its own sphere. To meddle with this social sovereignty, to abuse it, means tyranny. The domain of the family has a sovereignty of its own; that of the church likewise; and this same principle must be recognized with respect to the fields of art, science, business, and so forth. The one social sphere may not transgress upon the territory of the other.

That in this very conception a rich fountain of freedom is hidden, will be realized at once. For in this way there is not a shadow of a chance that the government should ever attempt to hamper the free development of any social sphere. The government itself must remain within the limits placed around it by the King of heaven. What, then, is the task of the government with respect to society? As a *mechanical* instrument

*Dr. A. Kuyper, Calvinism, p. 126.

in the hand of God to support the *organical* spheres of society, which have been impaired and disrupted because of sin, and to protect the one social sphere from encroachments on the part of the other. The government is the rod, placed beside the plant, to hold it up. Without that rod the plant would not be able to stand erect and its flowery crown would soon rest in the dust.

These are some of the principles of Calvinism. Did our New England Fathers live up to them? Were they conscious of these principles, which in modern times have been enunciated anew and in modern form? They were. Let us point to a number of facts.

The colonists, first of all, were bent on preserving the freedom of the individual. They recognized a personal sovereignty. Freedom of conscience, of speech, and of the press, were the results.

Next we point to the family life of our fathers. The sanctity of the home was recognized. The father was the head of the family; he was assisted by his wife; and the children paid due respect to both, in accordance with the apostolic ordinance. There were family rights, and they were maintained most vigorously. The family, to the mind of the colonist, was the unit of the state, and in certain cases only the head of the family was allowed to cast his vote for political officers. Says Doyle, "The whole system of life in a New England town presupposed a community of households, not a community of individuals."*

The fact that a complete separation of church and state was first effected in America shows that the colonists recognized the distinct sovereignty of both spheres. A free church in a free state—because both had, in an equal measure, received their freedom from God. As

*Doyle, English Colonies in America, vl. III, p. 5.

a social organization the church was at full liberty to do what it pleased, provided it remained within it own limits.

Also in the sphere of education a special sovereignty was acknowledged. We shall have ample opportunity to show this, after a little.

On the whole it can be said that the colonists were extremely afraid of what the Dutch designate by the striking term of "Staatsalbemoeiing." That is, they disliked and feared governments that were "busy-bodies," that mingled themselves in business which was not theirs, that sought to have their will and wish imposed on every person or group of persons, no matter whether they had jurisdiction in the case or not. Our fathers shunned that kind of government from the beginning. They were extremely "touchy" on this point.

Recognizing personal sovereignty in the matter of property, the New Englanders refused to stand for any system of taxation in which their personal voice had not been heard. Together the colonists decided on questions of taxation and revenue. And when the colonies expanded, so that all these matters could not be discussed in detail any more by the entire group of colonists, these liberty-loving men sent representatives who should defend their personal rights and see to it that no injustice was done to anybody. Here originated that famous slogan, "No taxation without representation!" This originally Calvinistic motto lived until the time of the great revolution, even until now, and caused the real break between mother and daughter. In fact, this same motto and the principle that was back of it caused the colonial system of representation from which afterwards our national House of Representatives developed.

In connection with property rights we could write about many things, about the mortgage system, the

credit system, and so forth, but suffice it to say that in all these matters the "sovereignty of the individual spheres" was fully maintained.

Community rights were also remembered and taken care of. Each town, no matter how great the difference in size, sent an equal number of representatives, so that small communities saw their rights insured as well as large ones. When the colonies organized, in 1643, each colony sent an equal number of Commissioners, small New Haven just as many as large Massachusetts. We find this system continued in our national Senate, to which every state, no matter what its size, sends two members.

Some of the things we have mentioned (and there are more) were for the first time introduced in New England, others were copied from the Calvinistic Netherlands. In fact—(the reader will pardon us if we insert this statement at this point) the President of the United States of America is, so far as his functions and powers are concerned, none other but the old "Stadhouder" of the United Netherlands!

The social principles of Calvinism produced a general equality among men, and the confession that "all men are born free and equal" was not only held aloft as an ideal truth, but was lived as well. The colonists, all of them, were "freemen," in the full sense of that word. Class-distinctions were contraband. They did not regard all men equal in the French revolutionary sense. They believed that in certain cases certain men stood above the rest,—spiritually, intellectually, officially. But *as men* all were equal. This spiritual, intellectual, or official superiority of one party over another never meant, that the possessor of these higher qualifications possessed also a larger number of inherent human rights. The sovereignty of the individual spheres would act

protectingly here. In his own personal sphere every last man was free, absolutely free, and he owed no one an account of his doings except his God.

Slavery never flourished in the New England colonies. It may be claimed that the northern colonists could not make use of slaves as well as those of the southern colonies. In the south the extensive plantations called for a large amount of help. Social conditions must needs be different in the North. We answer: If the men of the North had had no scruples of conscience in this matter, if slavery had not been a thing flagrantly opposed to their holiest convictions, they would have been the possessors of human beings, they would have traded in immortal souls, they would have bartered and sold the images of the Most High, as well as the southern colonists. But they, very naturally, recoiled from all these things. It is reported that at the end of the seventeenth century certain less conscientious men had undertaken to bring a few black slaves to New England. They tried to defend their act by pointing to the precedent found in the Old Testament. Especially Sewall (Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society, 1863-64) attacked these men. He argued that slavery was against the laws of nature, established by God, and that the Bible recognized all men as the co-heirs of Adam. Sewall ably overthrew the arguments taken from the Old Testament, in favor of slavery, and pointed to the differences between the old and the new dispensation. Calvinism and slavery agree as well as fire and water. Just how much of our anti-slavery war, in the middle of the last century, must be ascribed to the influences of Calvinism, is a subject we cannot touch upon in this connection.

In our day the Church is being accused of having too much of the supernatural in its doctrines and preaching. It is accused of extreme "other-worldliness." It

is claimed that the church in the past has forgotten its calling here upon earth, and has busied itself constantly and almost exclusively with the things that cannot be seen. Hence the socializing tendency in the churches of our time. People want to use the church as an instrument for the moral uplift, the social well-being, of mankind. Its true character is ignored. The laws and precepts of its royal Head are forgotten. And a general metamorphosis of the whole organization is aimed at.

We have nothing to say, at this juncture, about the institutions which we call churches. We shall not criticize, at this moment, any religious organization or movement. We place all other systems and movements and religious currents on the side, for the time being, and fix our eyes solely upon that religious system which we call Calvinism. And then we claim, and claim with all the emphasis we can gather, that Calvinism has *not* ignored the things of this world; that Calvinism, for one, has not spent its time bathing its head in the clouds, in the meantime trampling upon the good things that God caused to grow upon his earth. Calvinism is supernatural in the extreme, and yet at the same time it is so "natural," that no historian, who was at all acquainted with its ideas and tenets, has ever ventured to claim anything to the contrary. And how could it be different! Is not God the supreme Sovereign also of this earth and of the things of this earth? Is it not all His property, His eternal property? Does He not own the universe? It is true, in an ethical sense Satan is temporarily the god of this world, but in a juridical sense—what then?

The Calvinist feels duty bound to snatch from Satan, the usurper of the divine possessions, everything he possibly can. God must rule again, both in a juridical and in an ethical sense. To that end he lets his light shine, the true Calvinist,—he tries to eradicate sin and

the results of sin, he tries to help the weak, sustain the suffering ones, create joy and peace. But he also wants to devote all things to his God. He wants his God to be praised in every sphere of human activity. For His praise, God created all things. Satan tried to disturb God's plans. But—he shall not pass, and the Calvinist is going to do all he can to thwart the hellish plans of the Monarch of the Deep and to realize the plans of the King of heaven.

The church must work towards that end. So must the state. So must society. So must every sphere in the social domain. Our fathers loved science—we shall prove it anon. Our fathers loved art. Yes, dear reader, our *Puritan* fathers loved *art!* Are not we contradicting plain history when we make statements as "absurd" as that? We are not. It is true, the Puritans in New England did next to nothing in the line of practical art. They were rather afraid of it. They loved it and were afraid of it. To elucidate this, think of a boy who had too good a taste of a quantity of delicious fruit. The effects are quite disagreeable. It takes a rather long time before his agonies are over, and then, for a while, he shuns the good apples altogether. For a while! Is not the fruit good, as good as it used to be? Does he not like it? Very much so. And still, for a while, he is afraid of it!—The illustration is odd and rather coarse, perhaps. But it ought to drive home the truth. The Puritans loved art—but they had had too much of it —in the Roman and Anglican Churches. And now they shunned it. But, again, they really *loved* it. Was not the author of Paradise Lost a Puritan in bone and marrow? Were not many of the Dutch painters "Puritans"? Were not Bourgeois and Goudimel, great composers as they were, "Puritans"? The former had studied under the very direction of Calvin. Did not the Dutch school

of painters flourish just when Dutch Calvinism was at its zenith? But—be it enough! The servants of Him, who lives in Zion, "the perfection of beauty,"* who caused, by His own direction, one of the most artistic and beautiful buildings to be erected that ever adorned this earth, the Israelitish place of worship,—they certainly could not despise art! It is true, also here certain excrescences appeared, but that says nothing of the body as a whole.

And let us meet at this very place and time an objection which is almost surely to be made—If this reticence in the sphere of art be wholly due to the wrong use that Romans and Anglicans made of it, why, then, was the New England Puritan so stern and morose with respect to other things which did not immediately concern his religion? Why was his entire life so gloomy, so pessimistic? Why do we never see the glad sunbeams of happiness play upon the greensward, around the Puritan home?

Let us answer these questions first of all with a contra-question: Are all these assertions true? *Was* the Puritan really as he has often been depicted? *Was* he, to all appearances, a child of sorrow, of woe, and of misery?

It is necessary that we ponder this for a moment, since the opinion seems to prevail that our present-day buoyant, cheerful, spirited social life can in no wise have any historical connection with the colonial mode of living in New England. Let us, first of all, make a concession. It is a fact, an undeniable fact, that many of the early colonists, and also of those that immigrated at a later period, were extremely serious, at times excessively so. Writers, who did not like the principles of the early Puritans or who cared very little for religion themselves,

*Psalms of David, L. vs. 2.

have shown us this trait of character in the darkest of colors, have even stooped to besmirch the good name of our fathers on account of it.

On the whole it can be stated that this air of solemnity was the result of a reaction against the English laxity of morals on the one hand, and was on the other hand caused by the tremendous struggles that these brave men had gone through. Psychologically this can be explained and conceived of very well. We grant, however, that some of the Puritans identified moroseness with piety. But in which class of Christians are there not, at least at times, exceptions to the rule? There were also Puritans, as we have already remarked in another connection, who wished to copy the Mosaic form of government, thinking that they were thus striving after the real, God-ordained, type of government. But Calvin himself, in his Institutes, had already condemned all such attempts; had termed the standpoint of this kind of people "both foolish and false."

Besides, a great deal of exaggerating has been done in this field. It has now been proved beyond doubt, for example, that the so-called "Blue Laws" of Connecticut never existed. Some wise crook, posing as historian, had set the machinery of his imagination to work—and the famous and celebrated and illustrious Blue Laws were the result. And the Puritan of the Blue Laws certainly was saintly enough to make one "rily"! No wonder that people with red blood in their veins began to ridicule such affected piety.

The great mass of New England Puritans were far from gloomy and melancholy. Calvin himself, who has been depicted by historians as the saddest man in the world, was not sad at all. He was serious, but not sad. The writer recently came across a letter of the great

Genevan in which he wrote to a friend, "I shall soon come to visit you, and then we can have a good laugh together." And so also the Calvinists of New England. They liked pleasures. They enjoyed seeing their children frolic on the greensward. The following are some of the pleasures, safe and sane pleasures, that were known among the Puritans: Joyous family meetings and plenty of "eats" on Thanksgiving day; feasting and picknicking on Election day, when the magistrates assumed their office; various kinds of sport by the young people on the training days of the colonial militia (of these there were several in one year); quilting parties among the women; husking parties; festivities by the raising of the timber frames of new houses; and even wrestling matches and shooting matches at times. All these pleasures, however, were controlled by a sound Christian spirit, and there was nothing degenerate about them.

In concluding this part of the present chapter we would beg permission to quote from a great Frenchman, de Tocqueville, who says in connection with a description of American society, "The two or three main ideas which constitute the basis of the social theory of the United States were first combined in the northern British colonies, more generally denominated the States of New England. The principles of New England spread at first to the neighboring States; they then passed successively to the more distant ones; and at length they imbued the whole confederation. They now extend their influence beyond its limits over the whole American world. The civilization of New England has been like a beacon lit upon a hill, which, after it has diffused its warmth around, tinges the distant horizon with its glow."*

*De Tocqueville, Democracy in America, ps. 30, 31.

4. Education

Calvinism has always stood for a broad and general education. Among the Reformatory movements of the sixteenth century there was none that claimed so much attention for the great needs of popular education. Calvinism has always tended towards the uplift of the masses. Not only the priesthood was to be the favorite of Minerva, but the people as well. Everybody knows of the wonderful thing that happened in the Dutch city of Leyden, during the Eighty years' war. Leyden had been besieged by the Spaniards until hunger had emaciated every last man within its walls, until death and want and misery were rampant everywhere. At last deliverance came. The Prince of Orange, the nobles, and the other cities, wished to give to the brave city some token of their gratitude. The "burgers" of Leyden could choose between exemption from taxes for many years and a school. What was it they chose? They chose a school, a school of sciences,—the renowned University of Leyden! It was the Calvinism of these poor, emaciated "burgers," which made them think of education before anything else, even before food and drink and raiment.

It was Calvinism that gave to America its wonderful system of education!

The Calvinistic principles underlying this stand of the Beggars, Puritans, Covenanters, and Huguenots, we have already briefly mentioned in the Introduction. Calvinism restored to science its own domain, recognized the sovereignty of the sphere of science. Calvinism delivered science from the bonds in which it was held during the Middle Ages and early Reformation times. Either the pope or the emperor controlled the domain of science in these early times, and when the Renaissance

brought new life to the schools it was a question whether this host of Renaissance men, this new group of thinkers, would subject themselves to church or state authority, or would stand on their own feet and proclaim that science, by the grace of God, was sovereign in its own particular sphere. The world soon witnessed the sad spectacle that the majority of Renaissance men became subject either to the imperial or the papal power. And then it was that Calvinism, with its principle of the sovereignty of the social spheres, cast aside these old, unnatural bonds, and created a realm of science, where God alone was the Ruler.

The New England Calvinists formed no exception to the rule. "In ignorance, the Puritans maintained, lay the principal strength of popery in religion as well as of despotism in politics."* In the colony of New Plymouth schools were erected at a later date than in the Massachusetts Bay district. This was due to the extreme poverty of the Plymouth colonists. They were not able to support schoolteachers for a considerable period. But that does not mean that no education was provided for. The fathers in the home and the pastors in the church tried to make up for the temporary lack of regular instructors, and they did so with full application of soul and mind. George Park Fisher tells us that seemingly no attempts were made by the Plymouth colonists to obtain Christian schools until the year 1670. We have found, however, in the colonial Laws of 1663, that the Court already at that time urged all towns to establish schools and to provide for schoolmasters. If Professor Fisher means that nothing real had been accomplished until 1670, he undoubtedly is right. At a meeting of the General Court of New Plymouth, held at

*John Fiske, Beginnings of New England, p. 151.

Plymouth, in June, 1670, it was decided, "upon divers serious considerations them thereunto moving," to use the profits of the fishing at Cape Codd for the maintenance of a "*free* school."* At a court meeting held on March 4, 1672, it was reported that such a school had been started at New Plymouth, and that it was a successful undertaking. The citizens of New Plymouth had also set aside a "considerable tract of upland and meadow" . . . in order that "whatsoever proffits may in any way arise from it or by the improuement (of the same) . . . (might be set aside) for and towards the maintenance and upholding of the said scoole att Plymouth; as alsoe since seuerall of the towne of Plymouth, out of their good affections, haue freely giuen out of theire owne estates for the erecting or procuring a convenient scoole house, not onely for the better accomodating of the scollers, but alsoe for the scoolmaster to liue and reside in, as God by His providence may please to present,—all the premises being considered, in hope that God may please soe to smile vpon this our day of smale thinges as to make it a blessing to the riseing generation . . . etc., etc."

Before 1678 the Plymouth citizens had made arrangements to provide for "grammer scooles (high schools) in each towne of this jurisdiction."

In 1647 a law was already in existence in Massachusetts to the effect that ordinary Christian schools be established in any place where fifty householders lived together, and that high schools be erected where the number of householders rose to one hundred. This rule was strictly enforced.

The Puritans were set on having their schools be *Christian* schools, not in the shallow modern sense of that term, but according to its original and fundamental

*Records of New Plymouth, vl. V, ps. 107, 108.

meaning. In 1654 the Court of Massachusetts decided upon the following: "Forasmuch as it greatly concernes the welfare of this country that the youth thereof be educated, not only in good literature, but (also in) sound doctrine, this Court doth therefore commend it to the serious consideration & speciall care of the overseers of the colledge, & the selectmen in the severall townes, not to admitt or suffer any such to be contynued in the office or place of teaching, educating or instructing of youth or child, in the colledge or schooles, that haue manifested ymselues vnsound in the fayth, or scandelous in theire liues, & not giueing due satisfaction according to the rules of Christ."*

In Connecticut education had been provided for before the year 1650. The citizens had thus expressed themselves: "It being one chief project of Satan to keep men from the knowledge of the Scripture by persuading from the use of tongues, to the end that learning may not be buried in the graves of our forefathers, in church and commonwealth, the Lord assisting our endeavors. . . ." (Follow instructions to establish schools in every township).†

Harvard College was founded as early as 1636, only six years after the settlement of Boston, "by a vote of the General Court of Massachusetts, which appropriated 'towards a school or college' the sum of four hundred pounds, 'equal to a year's rate of the whole colony.' The next year the General Court fixed the site of the college at Newton, the name of which place was changed to Cambridge, in commemoration of the English university, where many of the first emigrants received their literary training; and in 1638 the college took its pres-

*Shurtleff Records of the Governor and Company of the Mass. Bay, vl. III, p. 343.

†Connecticut Code of Laws, 1650, p. 90.

ent name from John Harvard, a clergyman of Charlestown, who left it a large bequest in money (about eight hundred pounds) and books (about two hundred and sixty volumes). The same year the first class was formed under two instructors. In 1640 the proper career of the college began, with the appointment of a president, the Rev. Henry Dunster.''

In September, 1644, the Rev. Shepard, pastor of the church at Cambridge (we might say, the College church), urged the Commissioners of the United Colonies (the Confederacy was now one year old) to provide in some way for a students' fund, and in his communication to the Commissioners says, ''Those whom God hath called to attend the welfare of religious Commonweales haue been prompt to extend their care for the good of Publike Schooles by meanes of wch the Commonwealth may be furnished wth kno-and understanding men in all callings, the Churches wth an able ministery in all places and wthout wch it is easy to see how both these estates may decline and degenerate into grosse ignorance, and consequently into great and vniusall prophanesse. . .''

The commissioners, in answer to the Rev. Shepard's communication, decided on the following: ''Whereas the most considerable persons in these Colonies came into these pts of America that they might enjoy Christ in His ordinances wthout disturbance, and whereas among many other precious mercies the ordinances haue been and are dispenced among us wth much puritie and power, The Commissioners tooke it into their serious consideracion how some due mayntenance according to God might be provided and setled, both for the prsent and future for the encouragement of the ministers who labour therein and concluded to propound and comend it to eich genrall Court.''*

*Pulsifer, Acts of the Commissioners, vl. I, ps. 19, 20.

The Rev. Shepard had suggested that each family give each year a peck bushel of corn for maintaining students, and the Commissioners commended also this suggestion to the General Courts. The result of it all was that every one of the colonies heartily co-operated in giving poor students a chance to study. In 1647 it was testified that the annual income for this purpose was more than fifty pounds. Soon there was an overflow of money for this fund, and the Rev. Dunster, president of Harvard college, asked the Commissioners whether part of the money collected for poor students might not be used for buying books on Law, Physics, Philosophy and Mathematics, "the furnishinge whereof would be both honourable & proffitable to the Country in generall & in speciall to the schollars, whose various inclinations to all professions might thereby be incouraged & furthered. . . ."*

How beautiful a testimony, this request of president Dunster, of the true Calvinistic spirit of these men! All the world, and all the sciences in the world, for God! There surely was nothing "extremely otherworldly" about this!

Harvard college developed into the great Harvard University. In 1700 another Calvinistic college was established—the present Yale University. Democracy requires popular enlightenment. The New England Calvinists have taken care of it.

And not only by means of their schools have the Puritans brought about this enlightenment. Professor Fisher claims that the preaching of doctrinal sermons for generations was a very important factor in the development of American mental life. "The habits of attention, of discrimination, and of reasoning, which were thus nurtured, must be taken into account if one would

*Pulsifer, Acts of the Commissioners, p. 95.

comprehend the mental life of New England.''* According to Professor Fisher, this preaching lasted until the early decades of the nineteenth century. And Fiske also stresses this same fact, be it in a somewhat different form, when he argues, in his Beginnings of New England, that the free discussion of theological questions by ''laymen'' was profitable to the United States and brought about the present enlightenment.

But Fiske strikes the wrong key when he claims that the universal education which the Puritans stood for brought about just the opposite of what they intended, namely ''the liberal and enlightened Protestantism which is characteristic of the best American society of the present day.'' For was it this universal education *as such* that produced these consequences? Or was it the subject-matter which the educators saw fit to present to their pupils, in later years? Cannot the same be said of this universal education as of many other institutions that Calvinism has given to our country—that we have retained the form, in almost every case, but have for the larger part lost the substance, and that we have now for a long time been busy filling the hollow forms with revolutionary and humanistic inventions?

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*George Park Fisher, The Colonial Era, p. 170.

End of Volume I.

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